

S
333.784 Snowdrifters
F2hsst Snowmobile Trail
1996 System,
environmental
review

Department
of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks



1400 So. 19th
Bozeman, MT 59715

November 4, 1996

TO: Governor's Office, Glenn Marx, Room 204, State Capitol, P.O. 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801
Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Room 106, P.O. Box 201704, Helena, MT 59620
Dept. Environmental Quality, Metcalf Building, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, MT 59620-0901
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Director's Office
Parks Division
Fisheries Division
Wildlife Division
Lands Section
Design & Construction Bureau
Legal Unit
FWP Commissioners
MT Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, POB 201202 Helena, MT 59620-1202
MT State Parks Association, P.O. Box 699, Billings, MT 59103
MT State Library, 1515 E. Sixth Ave., POB 201800, Helena, MT 59620
James Jensen, Montana Environmental Information Center, POB 1184, Helena, MT 59624
Janet Ellis, Montana Audubon Council, POB 595, Helena, MT 59624
George Ochenski, POB 689, Helena, MT 59624
Madison County Commissioners, Courthouse, Virginia City, MT 59755
Jerry DiMarco, P.O. Box 1571, Bozeman, MT 59771
Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 1175, Helena, MT 59624
Wayne Hurst, P.O. Box 728, Libby, MT 59923
Glen Hockett, 745 Doane Road, Bozeman, MT 59715

Ladies and Gentlemen: The enclosed Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared for the Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Club's groomed snowmobile trails, and is submitted for your consideration. Questions and comments will be accepted from November 4 through 5 p.m., December 3, 1996. If you have questions, feel free to contact me at 994-4042. All comments should be sent to the FWP office at 1400 S. 19th Avenue, Bozeman, Montana 59715

Sincerely,

Stephen L. Lewis
Stephen L. Lewis
Regional Supervisor

STATE DOCUMENTS COLLECTION

JUN 23 1997

MONTANA STATE LIBRARY
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HELENA, MONTANA 59620

01 EAOE

SNOWMOBILE GROOMING PROGRAM
MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS

SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS

- The EA document will be submitted to the Environmental Quality Council upon signing of the Decision Notice, following the 30 day comment period.
- A description of the proposed action is provided in the EA document along with maps identifying location of the groomed trails.
- The benefits of the proposed action are to provide grooming for the sport of snowmobiling, as well as snowmobile safety, education, enforcement and positive economic benefits.
- Groomed trails are located on U. S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and private lands. All clearances are provided and included with the EA document.
- All impacts are evaluated and mitigation identified in the Public Awareness Plan included with the EA document. The key issues evaluated are:
 1. Administration - all federal and state environmental analyses requirements are being met.
 2. Air Quality - no negative impacts.
 3. Topography, Soils, Hydrology - Normally during the grooming season, there are no trails completely bare of snow. Should insufficient snow cover areas become apparent on the trail system, the grooming map will be revised to reflect these areas and the trail will be closed. There are no wet meadow areas being groomed.
 4. Wildlife - Wildlife clearance has been provided, however, the club plans to provide further mitigation by making the public aware and to further reduce impacts, confrontations and protect habitat, preserve natural behavioral traits and population distribution. Trails will continue to avoid or skirt with vegetation shields ungulate wintering areas. For further details, refer to further mitigation in Public Awareness Plan included with the EA document.
 5. Vegetation - All trails are on existing roads or tails. The club will work with land managing agencies in an attempt to control noxious weeds in the area of the groomed trail system.
 6. Socioeconomic - The club hosts two annual events that include approximately 300 participants. They also host monthly group rides which involve 10 to 15 participants. The club's Safety Officer actively participates in all events. Clubs signing strategies place a great deal of emphasis on public events.

7. Cultural - All groomed trails are located on existing roads or trails. There are no cultural impacts.

8. Safety/Private Property - Clubs signing strategies address safety concerns, hazards, private property and other pertinent concerns and issues. Further details are provided in the EA document.

9. Wilderness Areas - There are no groomed trails near a wilderness boundary, designated non-motorized areas, wilderness study areas or ski trails.

10. Law Enforcement - No snowmobiling violations have been issued by the Helena or Deerlodge National Forests.

11. Changes in Aesthetic Values - Clubs signing strategy includes "Pack-it-in Pack-it-out" signs. Litter remediation plan included with EA document.

■ Analysis of reasonable alternatives include:

Alternative 1 - No change - continue grooming as in the past with no changes.

Alternative 2 - Discontinue any further grooming. Snowmobiling would continue on ungroomed trails, no signing or safety program would be provided, nor would information be provided regarding ungulate winter ranges or other sensitive issues.

Alternative 3 - Continue grooming with modifications. Additional information and education will be provided to the public to minimize all impacts as much as possible, through an enhanced signing and safety program.

PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE: ALTERNATIVE 3

■ The EA evaluates mitigation, stipulation and other control measures. Refer to the Public Awareness Plan for details.

■ The cover letter lists distribution of document and notice of public comment period.

■ Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks contact person is:

Ray Heagney
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
1400 South 19th
Bozeman, MT 59715
(406)-994-4042

■ This EA evaluation is the adequate level of analysis based on the findings of the Snowmobile Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.

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**HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS
SNOWMOBILE TRAIL SYSTEM
ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

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Montana Snowmobile Grant Program

PEIS REVIEW PROCESS

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. **Type of Proposed State Action** Award the Helena Snowdrifters trail system a grant to continue grooming the existing trails and roads designated as snowmobile use.

2. **Agency Authority for the Proposed Action** State of Montana statutes that relate to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), Chapter 2, Part 1 statutes relating to Recreation: MCA 23-2-101, and Part 6 statutes relating to snowmobiling: MCA 23-2-106 to 23-2-656. State of Montana statutes that relate to Montana Environmental Policy Act: MCA 75-1-101 to 75-1-1112.

3. **Name of Project** Helena Snowdrifters Trail System.

4. **Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor (if other than the agency)**
Helena Snowdrifters, P.O. Box 4626, Helena, MT, 59604-4626

5. **If Applicable: Estimated Construction/Commencement Date** Trail Grooming, December 1 through March 31
Estimated Completion Date: Ongoing
Current Status of Project Design (% complete): Ongoing

6. **Location Affected by Proposed Action (county, range and township)**
Lewis & Clark County - T11S, & T12S; R1W, & R2W
Helena National Forest, Helena Ranger District

7. **Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently: Groomed trail located on approximately (208) miles of existing roads and trails.**

(a) Developed: residential <u>0</u> acres industrial <u>0</u> acres	(d) Floodplain <u>0</u> acres
(b) Open Space/Woodlands/ Recreation <u>0</u> acres	(e) Productive: irrigated cropland <u>0</u> acres dry cropland <u>0</u> acres forestry <u>0</u> acres rangeland <u>0</u> acres other <u>0</u> acres
© Wetlands/Riparian Areas <u>0</u> acres	

8. **Map/site plan: attach an original 8 ½" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.**

(SEE ATTACHED)

9. Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action or Project including the Benefits and Purpose of the Proposed Action.

The proposed action is to award a Montana State Snowmobile Program Grant to the Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Club, for the purpose of grooming the existing groomed trail system, identified on the attached map.

This document is tied to the Montana Snowmobile Grant Program Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS), of which Alternative Three was selected and states: “the continuation of the current program with modifications.” These modifications require an environmental review document be prepared by FWP for each grant application, unless projects are classified as categorical exclusions.

This environmental assessment addresses only the snowmobile trails located on lands of the Helena National Forest, Helena Ranger District.

A Multi-Party Agreement was updated in 1993 for those existing snowmobile trails established on existing roads and trails. The agreement will be affective until one party calls for the termination of the agreement or there is a change in the current situation.

By completing the Snowmobile Grant Program PEIS in 1993, FWP complied with its statutory responsibility for the action of: Administration of state funds, as grants to grooming project sponsors for the maintenance of designated trail routes.

The site specific analysis is the responsibility of the land management agency. The U.S. Forest Service has completed this analysis in the Gallatin Forest Plan and determined that existing federal roads and trails are categorically excluded under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

In 1992, the Washington Office of the Forest Service issued amendment 1909.15-92-1 to FSH 1909.15, Environmental Policy and Procedures Handbook. This amendment clarified categorical exclusions. One item clarified was grooming. This amendment lists those categories which,

“At the discretion of the responsible official, a project or case file and a decision memo are not required but may be prepared for categories of actions set forth in sections 21.1a and 31.1b.” (Section 31.1)

Section 31.1b lists those categories established by the Chief as,

“...categorically excluded from documentation in an EIS or EA unless scoping indicates extraordinary circumstances exist.”

Listed under Item 31.1b is item 4.d,

“Pruning vegetation and cleaning culverts along a trail and grooming the surface of the trail.”

10. Listing of any other Local, State or Federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) **Permits:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Helena National Forest, Helena Ranger District	Multi-Party Agreement	1993
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Annual Project Agreement	1996

(b) **Funding:**

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Region Three 1400 S. 19th Bozeman, MT 59715	\$ 12,560

© **Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**

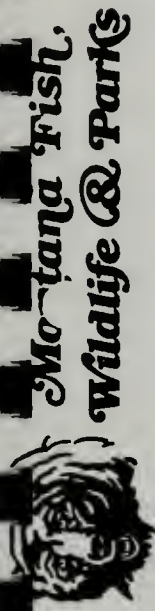
<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Type of Responsibility</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Grant Management
Helena National Forest, Helena Ranger District	Land Management Agency

11. List of Agencies Consulted During Preparation of the PEIS Review Process:

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Helena National Forest, Helena Ranger District
Montana Resource Information System

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Environmental Review Criteria
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Snowmobile Grant Program

Proposals for grants allocated under the Montana Snowmobile Grant Program shall be reviewed in accordance with the following Environmental Review Criteria. Environmental review on existing funded snowmobile trails will be completed as expeditiously as possible with the Department setting priorities and attempting to complete environmental review first for those funded trails located in the more environmentally sensitive areas. In no case will an existing trail, not in full compliance within three years, continue to be funded under the Grant Program. In some cases, proposed projects may be determined by the Department to be categorically excluded from the environmental review process. A categorical exclusion may be denied if the Department determines that special circumstances warrant further environmental review. Such circumstances include those where use of the trail may individually, collectively or cumulatively cause significant environmental impacts. If a project satisfies number 1 below, the project qualifies for a categorical exclusion.

1. Continuation of an existing program with no on-ground changes and that has previously satisfied MEPA reviews.

Projects that do not satisfy number 1, but do satisfy numbers 2 through 7, qualify for a categorical exclusion.

2. Snowmobile trail on federal lands is already incorporated in U.S. Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management travel plan and Multi-Party Agreement has been signed.
3. Fish, Wildlife and Parks wildlife clearance has been obtained.
4. Snowmobile Project Agreement has been signed by sponsor and Department.
5. Project is on existing roadway or previously ungroomed, but authorized by the land management agency, snowmobile trail.
6. Development or improvements on federal lands have already satisfied NEPA.
7. Trail is not in a wilderness study area or designated non-motorized area.

If the proposed project does not meet the requirements necessary for a categorical exclusion it must be reviewed in accordance with the Environmental Review Criteria identified below:

When reviewing projects within the checklist that result in a request for additional information, three subsequent requests for the same information will result in a denial of the project, or that portion of the project if it is a stand alone component.

Prior to making a final determination that a new or substantially changed application satisfies the criteria for a categorical exclusion, the Department will provide thirty calendar days for public review and comment.



**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
Issue 1 Administration	Map identifying proposed trails and facilities	1 Does map clearly identify proposed activities (i.e. trails, parking lots, etc.)?	Y	Go to #2	YES See Attachment A
			N	Request Submittal	
	Decision memo and env. document from land mgmt agency	2 Do any proposed activities occur on lands managed by another agency?	Y	Go to #2a	YES
			N	Go to #3	
		2a Did the land mgmt agency prepare an env. document?	Y	Go to #2b	YES
			N	Go to #3	
		2b Was the decision memo supplied with application?	Y	Go to #4	YES See Attachment B & C
			N	Request Submittal	
	Internal environmental review document	3 Does the proposal include operation and maintenance projects?	Y	Go to #3b	YES
			N	Go to #3a	
		3a Does the proposal include expansion or construction of trails or facilities	Y	Go to #3b	NO
			N	Go to #4	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		3b Has checklist EA been prepared?	Y	Go to #3c	N/A
			N	Request Submittal	
		3c Does the checklist EA satisfy MEPA/NEPA?	Y	Go to #3h	N/A
			N	Go to #3d	
		3d Has an EA been prepared?	Y	Go to #3e	N/A
			N	Request EA	
		3e Did the EA satisfy MEPA/NEPA?	Y	Go to #3h	N/A
			N	Go to #3f	
		3f Has an EIS been prepared?	Y	Go to #3g	N/A
			N	Request EIS	
		3g Did EIS satisfy MEPA/NEPA?	Y	Go to #3h	N/A
			N	Request Proposal	
		3h Did applicant supply decision notice?	Y	Go to #4	N/A
			N	Request Submittal	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
	Licenses, Leases, permits, clearances, etc.	4 Has applicant supplied appropriate copies required by other agencies?	Y	Go to #6	YES See Attachment B,C,D,E,F & G
			N	Request Submittal	
Issue 2 Air Quality	Map identifying proposed trails and facilities	6 Does map clearly identify proposed activities?	Y	Go to #6a	YES See Attachment A
			N	Request Submittal	
		6a Does proposal include expansion of existing or construction of new trails?	Y	Go to #6b	NO
			N	Go to #7	
	Connection to other trails or trail systems	6b Does the expanded or new trail connect with another trail system or trail?	Y	Go to #7	N/A
			N	Go to #7	
	Public awareness plan	7 Has applicant submitted a public awareness plan?	Y	Go to #9	YES See Attachment H
			N	Request Submittal	
Issue 3 Topography, Soils, Hydrology	Map identifying proposed trail or facilities	9 Does the map clearly identify proposed activities?	Y	Go to #9a	YES See Attachment A
			N	Request Submittal	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
		9a Are there areas of known insufficient snowcover along proposed trails?	Y	Go to #9b	YES See Stipulation
		9b Are areas of known insufficient snowcover identified on the maps?	N	Go to #9c	YES
		9c Are there areas characterized by summer wet meadows?	Y	Request Submittal	
		9d Are areas of known wet meadows identified on the map?	N	Go to #9d	NO
		9e Have viable alternatives around areas of known insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows been identified?	Y	Go to #9e	N/A
		10 Has applicant submitted a plan for avoidance of areas of known insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?	N	Request Submittal	
	Avoidance		Y	Stipulate - Go to #10	N/A
			N	Request Submittal	
			Y	Go to #10a	YES See Stipulation
			N	Request Plan	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
		10a Does the plan identify specific measures for each area identified on the map?	Y	Go to #11	YES See Stipulation
			N	Request Specifics	
	Seasonal Restrictions	11 Does the proposal include stream crossings?	Y	Go to #11a	YES See Attachment A
			N	Go to #12	
		11a Does the proposed stream crossing utilize an existing structure?	Y	Go to #12	YES
			N	Go to #11b	
		11b Are there viable alternatives to crossing the stream that would utilize existing structures?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #12	N/A
			N	Go to #11c	
		11c Is construction of temporary crossing structures viable in the proposed crossing location?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #12	N/A
			N	Reject	
	Public Awareness Plan	12 Has applicant submitted a public awareness plan?	Y	Go to #13	YES See Attachment H
			N	Request Submittal	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓	
Issue 4 Wildlife	Map identifying proposed activities	13	Does map clearly identify proposed activities?	Y	Go to #13a	YES See Attachment I	
				N	Request Submittal		
			13a	Are there known ungulate wintering areas in the vicinity of proposed trails?	Y	Go to #13b	YES See Attachment E
					N	Go to #14	
			13b	Are there ungulate wintering areas identified on the map?	Y	Go to #13c	NO See Stipulation
					N	Request Submittal	
			13c	Do proposed trails remain on the periphery of winter ranges?	Y	Go to #13f	YES See Stipulation
					N	Go to #14	
			13d	Does proposed trail pass through wintering areas?	Y	Go to #13e	N/A
					N	Go to #13h	
		13e	Is there a viable alternate route available for use?	Y	Go to #13f	N/A	
				N	Reject		

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
	Avoidance	13f Is the trail length along the periphery of the wintering area the least possible?	Y	Go to #13g	YES
			N	Revise Plan	
		13g Was vegetative screening used whenever possible?	Y	Go to #13h	YES
			N	Revise to utilize veg screen	
		13h Has signing plan been proposed to keep snowmobilers from disturbing wintering ungulates?	Y	Go to #14	YES Sec Stipulation
			N	Request Plan	
	Seasonal Restrictions	14 Are there ungulate wintering areas in grizzly bear habitat?	Y	Go to #14a	NO
			N	Go to #15	
		14a Are there proposed trails near these areas?			N/A
	Idle Zones	15 Are there known bald eagle nests or grizzly hibernation areas?	Y	Go to #15a	NO
			N	Go to #15d	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
		15a Are trails proposed near any of these sites?	Y	Go to #15b	N/A
		15b Are viable alternatives identified that avoid these areas?	N	Go to #15d	N/A
		15c Have idle zones been proposed for these areas?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #15d	N/A
		15d Has the Natural Heritage wildlife list for the proposed region been submitted (NRIS - State library)?	N	Go to #15c	N/A
		15e Does the Natural Heritage list identify any rare or endangered wildlife species in the area of the proposal?	Y	Go to #15d	N/A
			N	Stipulate - Go to #15d	N/A
			Y	Go to #15e	YES See Attachment J
			N	Request Submittal	
			Y	Go to #15f	YES
			N	Go to #16	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
		15f Has applicant submitted an avoidance or seasonal restriction plan or other appropriate mitigative measures for these areas?	Y	Go to #16	YES See Stipulation
			N	Request Submittal	
	Signing	16 Have signing strategies been proposed to identify idle zones?	Y	Go to #17	NO See Attachment H
			N	Stipulate - Go to #17	
	Public awareness plan	17 Has a public awareness plan been established?	Y	Go to #18	YES See Attachment H
			N	Stipulate - Go to #18	
	Clearance Oversight	18 Did applicant supply info and wildlife clearance with application?	Y	Go to #19	YES See Attachment E
			N	Request	
Issue 5 Vegetation	Maps identifying proposed trails and facilities	19 Does map clearly identify proposed activities?	Y	Go to #19a	YES See Attachment A
			N	Request	
		19a Is the proposed trail/facility located entirely on an existing road or trail?	Y	Go to #20	YES
			N	Go to #19b	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
		19b Have existing roads been used whenever possible?	Y	Go to #19c	N/A
		19c Does all or a portion of trails occur on a vegetated road or trail?	N	Stipulate - Go to #19c	
		19d Does all or a portion of proposed activity occur on undeveloped land?	Y	Go to #19e	N/A
		19e Has the Natural Heritage vegetation list for the proposed region been submitted (NRIS - State Lib)?	N	Go to #19d	
		19f Does the Natural Heritage list identify any rare or endangered plant species?	Y	Go to #19e	N/A
		19g Are any species on the list common in alpine tundra?	N	Go to #20	
			Y	Go to #19f	N/A
			N	Stipulate - Go to 19f	
			Y	Go to #19g	N/A
			N	Go to #20	
			Y	Go to #19h	N/A
			N	Go to #19j	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
		19h	Do any proposed trails that are not on existing roads cross alpine tundra?	Y	Go to #19i	N/A
		19i	Are there alternatives to crossing the alpine tundra?	N	go to #19j	
		19j	Do any proposed activities involve areas of insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?	Y	Go to #19k	N/A
		19k	Are there viable alternatives to avoid areas of insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?	N	Go to #20	
		19l	Has applicant submitted an avoidance or seasonal restriction plan for areas of insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #20	N/A
				N	Go to #19l	
				Y	Go to #20	N/A
				N	Request - Go to #20	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	√
	Monitoring for noxious weeds	20 Are noxious weeds present within the trail area, particularly in staging areas?	Y	Go to #20a	YES See Stipulation
			N	Go to #21	
		20a Has noxious weed plan been proposed in application?	Y	Go to #20b	YES See Stipulation
			N	Stipulate - Go to #20b	
	Public Awareness	20b Has monitoring plan been proposed to survey vegetation damage and spread of noxious weeds?	Y	Go to #21	YES See Stipulation
			N	Stipulate - Go to #21	
		21 Has a public awareness strategy been proposed?	Y	Go to #22	YES See Stipulation
			N	Stipulate - Go to #22	
Issue 6 Socioeconomic	Planning	22 Does the application include organized events or promotional activities that would utilize funded trails?	Y	Go to #22a	YES See Attachment K
			N	Go to #23	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
		22a Does application include projected number of trail users generated by the events?	Y	Go to #22b	YES See Attachment K
		22b Does application include a public safety plan for the events?	N	Request - Go to #22b	
		22c Has applicant identified additional employment requirements during event?	Y	Go to #22c	YES See Attachment L
			N	Stipulate - Go to #22c	
			Y	Go to #23	YES See Attachment K
			N	Request - Go to #23	
Issue 7 Cultural	Map identifying proposed trails and facilities	23 Has map identifying proposed trails or facilities been submitted?	Y	Go to #23a	YES See Attachment A
		23a Is entire proposed trail/facility located within an existing road or trail?	N	Request - Go to #23a	
			Y	Go to #24	YES
			N	Go to #23b	
		23b Does all or a portion of the proposed trail/facility occur on a historic road or trail?	Y	Go to #23d	N/A
			N	Go to #23c	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
		23c Does all or a portion of the proposed trail/facility occur on an undeveloped land?	Y	Go to #23d	N/A
		23d Do viable alternative routes exist that could utilize existing roads or trails?	N	Go to #24	
			Y	Stipulate - Go to #24	N/A
			N	Go to #23e	
	Site specific treatment	23e Was SHPO consulted for determination of need for cultural resource investigation?	Y	Go to #23f	N/A
			N	Stipulate - Go to #23f	
		23f Was a cultural resource investigation conducted?	Y	Go to #23g	N/A
			N	Inquire as to why	
		23g Were significant sites found?	Y	Go to #23h	N/A
			N	Go to #24	
		23h Were adequate mitigations applied (i.e. reroute, etc.)?	Y	Go to #23i	N/A
			N	Stipulate - Go to #23i	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
	Public awareness plan	23i	Is a public awareness strategy proposed?	Y	Go to #24	N/A
				N	Stipulate - Go to #24	
Issue 8 Safety/Private Property	Maps identifying proposed trails and facilities	24	Does map clearly identify proposed activities	Y	Go to #24a	YES See Attachment A
				N	Request - Go to #24a	
		24a	Does application include proposal for signing strategy identifying locations for warning signs?	Y	Go to #24b	YES See Attachment M
				N	Stipulate - Go to #24b	
		24b	Have private properties along proposed trails been identified?	Y	Go to #24c	YES See Attachment M
				N	Request - Go to #24c	
	Avoidance	24c	Do viable alternatives exist that avoid private property?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #25	NO
				N	Go to #24d	
	Signing and public awareness	24d	Has applicant included a strategy for signing and public awareness re: private property?	Y	Go to #25	YES See Attachment H & M
				N	Stipulate - Go to #25	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
Issue 9 Wilderness Areas	Map identifying proposed trails and facilities	25	Do maps identify proposed trail locations?	Y	Go to #25a	YES See Attachment A
				N	Request - Go to #25a	
		25a	Are proposed trails located near wilderness boundary or designated non-motorized area?	Y	Go to #25b	NO
				N	Go to #25e	
	Trail location strategies	25b	Is there heavy vegetative cover or topographic features between proposed trail and wilderness boundary /designated non-motorized area?	Y	Go to #25e	N/A
				N	Go to #25c	
		25c	Do viable alternatives exist that would utilize vegetative screening between wilderness boundary or designated non-motorized area?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #25e	N/A
				N	Go to #25d	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
		25d Do viable alternatives exist that would situate topographic features between proposed trail and wilderness area or designated non-motorized area?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #25e	N/A
		25e Does proposal include trails on or adjacent to established cc ski trails?	Y	Go to #25f	NO
		25f Are there viable alts. that would avoid placement of proposed trails on or adjacent to cc ski trails?	N	Go to #26	N/A
		26 Has signing program been established that would warn snowmobilers of shared use areas, wilderness boundaries, intersections, etc?	Y	Stipulate - Go to #26 Go to #27	YES See Attachment H & M
	Speed Limits	27 Does proposed trail go through residential areas of particular sensitivity?	N	Go to #27a	YES See Attachment M

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	
			N	Go to #28	✓
		Has applicant established appropriate speed limits or hourly restrictions in areas of sensitivity?	Y	Go to #28	YES See Attachment M
		27a	N	Stipulate - Go to #28	
		Has applicant proposed public awareness plan that includes consideration for residential and sensitive areas?	Y	Go to #29	YES See Attachment H
		28	N	Stipulate - Go to #29	
Issue 8 Law Enforcement		Has applicant provided law enforcement report from DFW&P Region Warden Captain and/or land managing agency identifying documented snowmobile trespass on private lands and/or wilderness areas caused by adjoining or nearby funded trail and proposal for addressing such violations?	Y	Go to #30	YES See Stipulation
		29	N	Stipulate - Go to #30	

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CRITERIA
MONTANA SNOWMOBILE GRANT PROGRAM**

DISCIPLINE	APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		REVIEW CRITERIA	Y/N (Circle 1)	REQUIRED ACTION	✓
Issue 10 Changes in Aesthetic Values	Litter Remediation	30	Has applicant included a trash receptacle location, placement and management strategy?	Y	Go to #30a	YES See Attachment N
				N	Stipulate - Go to #30a	
		30a	Has applicant proposed "pack-it-in pack-it-out" type signing strategy?	Y	Go to #30b	YES See Attachment M & N
				N	Stipulate - Go to #30b	
	Trail Location Strategies	30b	Has applicant satisfied questions 25-29?	Y	Go to #31	YES
				N	Go to #25	
		31	Have all appropriate boxes in right-hand column been checked?	Y	Env. considerations approved	YES
				N	Take appropriate actions until all boxes are checked	

**HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS
EA CHECKLIST REVIEW COMMENTS**

**Issue I
ADMINISTRATION**

Concerns about gaps in the environmental review process, program administration and multi-agency coordination efforts.

Requirement. Map identifying proposed trails and facilities.

Criteria. Does map clearly identify proposed activities (i.e. trails, parking lots, etc.)"

See Attachment - Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Trails Map 1992

Requirement. Decision memo and environmental document for land management agency.

Criteria. Do any proposed activities occur on lands managed by another agency?

Yes - proposed activities occur on lands managed by other agencies.

Criteria. Did the land management agency prepare an environmental document?

Yes - the land management agencies prepared an environmental document.

Criteria. Was the decision memo supplied with application?

See Attachment - U.S. Forest Service Decision Memo.

See Attachment - Bureau of Land Management Decision Memo.

Requirement. Internal environmental review document.

Criteria. Does the proposal include operation and maintenance projects?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Does the proposal include expansion or construction of trails or facilities?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Has checklist EA been prepared?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Does the checklist EA satisfy MEPA/NEPA?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Has an EA been prepared?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Did the EA satisfy MEPA/NEPA?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Has an EIS been prepared?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Did EIS satisfy MEPA/NEPA?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Did applicant supply decision notice?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Licenses, leases, permits, clearances.

Criteria. Has applicant supplied appropriate copies required by other agencies?

See Attachment - Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Trails 1992.

See Attachment - U.S. Forest Service Decision Memo.

See Attachment - Bureau of Land Management Decision Memo.

See Attachment - Multi-Party Agreement.

See Attachment - Fish, Wildlife and Parks Wildlife Clearance.

See Attachment - Snowmobile Project Agreement

See Attachment - Private Land Use Agreements.

Issue 2

AIR QUALITY

Changes in air quality in recreation-based winter communities and along snowmobile trails.

Requirement. Map identifying proposed trails and facilities.

Criteria. Does map clearly identify proposed activities?

See Attachment A - Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Trails 1992.

Criteria. Does proposal include expansion of existing or construction of new trails?

Yes - the proposal includes expansion or rerouting of trails.

Requirement. Connection to other trails or trail systems.

Criteria. Does the expanded or new trail connect with another trail system or trail?

Yes - the trail connects with another existing trail system, but the connection is not groomable.

See Attachment - Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Trails 1992.

Requirement. Public awareness.: Has applicant submitted a public awareness plan?

See - Public Awareness Plan.

Issue 3

TOPOGRAPHY, SOILS, HYDROLOGY

Changes in topography, soil stability and hydrologic Processes on and adjacent to snowmobile trails.

Requirement. Map identifying proposed trail or facilities.

Criteria. Does map clearly identify proposed activities?

See Attachment - Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Trails 1992.

Criteria. Are there areas of known insufficient snowcover along proposed trails?

Yes - at times there are areas of known insufficient snowcover along the proposed trails, very early or very late in the season in low-lying areas.

Criteria. Are areas of known insufficient snowcover identified on the maps?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Are there areas characterized by summer wet meadows?

No - there are no areas characterized by summer wet meadows.

Criteria. Are areas of known wet meadows identified on the map?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Have viable alternatives around areas of known insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows been identified?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Avoidance.

Criteria. Has applicant submitted a plan for avoidance of areas of known insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Does the plan identify specific measures for each area identified on the map?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Seasonal Restrictions.

Criteria. Does the proposal include stream crossings?

Yes - the proposal includes stream crossings.

See Attachment - Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Trails 1992.

Criteria. Does the proposed stream crossing utilize an existing structure?

Yes - stream crossings utilize existing structures.

Criteria. Are there viable alternatives to crossing the stream that would utilize existing structures?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Is construction of temporary crossing structures viable in the proposed crossing location?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Public Awareness Plan.

Criteria. Has applicant submitted a public awareness plan?

See - Public Awareness Plan

Issue 4

WILDLIFE

Changes in wildlife behavior, habitat and population distributions, particularly elk and grizzly bears.

Requirement. Map identifying proposed activities.

Criteria. Does map clearly identify proposed activities?

See Attachment - Forest Service Map.

Criteria. Are there known ungulate wintering areas in the vicinity of proposed trails?

No - there are no known ungulate wintering areas in the vicinity of the proposed trails.

Criteria. Are there ungulate wintering areas identified on the map?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Do proposed trails remain on the periphery of winter ranges?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Does proposed trail pass through wintering areas?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Is there a viable alternate route available for use?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Avoidance.

Criteria. Is the trail length along the periphery of the wintering area the least possible?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Was vegetative screening used whenever possible?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Has signing plan been proposed to keep snowmobilers from disturbing wintering ungulates?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Seasonal Restrictions.

Criteria. Are there ungulate wintering areas in grizzly bear habitat?

No - there are no ungulate wintering areas in any bear habitat.

Criteria. Are there proposed trails near these areas?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Have seasonal restrictions in these areas been identified?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Has a signing plan been proposed to mark restricted areas?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Idle Zones.

Criteria. Are there known bald eagle nests or grizzly hibernation areas?

No - there are no known bald eagle nests or grizzly hibernation areas.

Criteria. Are trails proposed near any of these sites?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Are viable alternatives identified that avoid these areas?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Have idle zones been proposed for these areas?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Has the Natural Heritage wildlife list for the proposed trails been submitted (NRIS - State library)?

See Attachment - Natural Heritage Wildlife and Vegetation

Criteria. Does the Natural Heritage list identify any rare or endangered wildlife species in the area of the proposal?

No - the Natural Heritage list does not identify any rare or endangered wildlife species in the area of the proposal.

Criteria. Has applicant submitted an avoidance or seasonal restriction plan or other appropriate mitigative measures for these areas?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Signing.

Criteria. Have signing strategies been proposed to identify idle zones?

Stipulation: There are no known bald eagle nests or grizzly hibernation areas.

Requirement. Public awareness plan.

Criteria. Has a public awareness plan been established?

See Attachment - Public Awareness.

Requirement. Clearance Oversight.

Criteria. Did applicant supply info and wildlife clearance with applications

See Attachment - Fish, Wildlife and Parks Wildlife Clearance.

Issue 5

VEGETATION

Changes in productivity and stability of vegetation communities along and adjacent to snowmobile trails.

Requirement. Maps identifying proposed trails and facilities.

Criteria. Does map clearly identify proposed activities?

See Attachment - Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Trails 1992.

Criteria. Is the proposed trail/facility located entirely on an existing road or trail?

Yes - the proposed trail/facility is located entirely on an existing road or trail.

Criteria. Have existing roads been used whenever possible?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Does all or a portion of trails occur on a vegetated road or trail?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Does all or a portion of proposed activity occur on undeveloped land?

Not Applicable.

Criteria Has the Natural Heritage vegetation list for the proposed region been submitted (NRIS - State Library)

See Attachment -Natural Heritage Wildlife and Vegetation

Criteria. Does the Natural Heritage list identify any rare or endangered plant species?

No - the Natural Heritage list does not identify any rare or endangered plant species.

Criteria. Are any species on the list common in alpine tundra?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Do any proposed trails that are not on existing roads cross alpine tundra"

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Are there alternatives to crossing the alpine tundra?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Do any proposed activities involve areas of insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Are there viable alternatives to avoid areas of insufficient snowcover of summer wet meadows?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Has applicant submitted an avoidance or seasonal restriction plan for areas of insufficient snowcover or summer wet meadows?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Monitoring for noxious weeds.

Criteria. Are noxious weeds present within the trail area, particularly in staging areas?

No - noxious weeds are not present within the trail area or staging areas. Trails are on existing roads or trails and all staging areas are improved parking areas.

Criteria. Has noxious weed plan been proposed in application?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Has a monitoring plan been proposed to survey vegetation damage and spread of noxious weeds?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Public Awareness.

Criteria. has a public awareness strategy been proposed?

See Attachment - Public Awareness Plan

Issue 6

SOCIOECONOMICS

Changes in socioeconomic character of affected Montana communities, including business income, personal income, population, public services and social well-being.

Requirement. Planning.

Criteria. Does the application include organized events or promotional activities that would utilize funded trails?

See Attachment - Organized Events and Activities.

Criteria. Does application include projected number of trail users generated by the events?

See Attachment - Organized Events and Activities.

Criteria. Does application include a public safety plan for the events?

See Attachment - Public Safety Plan.

Criteria. Has applicant identified additional employment requirements during events?

See Attachment - Organized Events and Activities.

Issue 7

CULTURAL

Change in unique cultural, historical, and traditional values of an area.

Requirement. Map identifying proposed trails and facilities.

Criteria. Has map identifying proposed trails or facilities been submitted?

See Attachment A - Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Trails 1992.

Criteria. Is entire proposed trail/facility located within an existing road or trail?

Yes - the entire proposed trail/facility is located within an existing road or trail.

Criteria. Does all or a portion of the proposed trail/facility occur on a historic road or trail?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Does all or a portion of the proposed trail/facility occur on an undeveloped land?"

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Do viable alternative routes exist that could utilize existing roads or trails?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Site specific treatments.

Criteria. Was SHPO consulted for determination of need for cultural resource investigation?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Was cultural resource investigation conducted?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Were significant sites found?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Were adequate mitigations applied (i.e. reroute, etc.)?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Public awareness plan.

Criteria. Is a public awareness strategy proposed?

Not Applicable.

Issue 8

SAFETY/PRIVATE PROPERTY

Changes in the level of safety and private property considerations in recreation based winter communities and along snowmobile trails.

Requirement. Maps identifying proposed trails and facilities.

Criteria. Does map clearly identify proposed activities?

See Attachment - Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Trails 1992.

Criteria. Does application include proposal for signing strategy identifying locations for warning signs?

See Attachment - Signing.

Criteria. Have private properties along proposed trails been identified?

See Attachment - Signing.

Requirement. Avoidance.

Criteria. Do viable alternatives exist that avoid private property?

No - viable alternatives do not exist that avoid private property, except where noted in Attachment - Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Trails 1992.

Requirement. Signing and public awareness.

Criteria. Has applicant included a strategy for signing and public awareness re: private property?

**See Attachment - Public Awareness and
Attachment M - Signing.**

Issue 9

WILDERNESS AREAS

Changes in the character of winter recreational communities, areas bordering designated wilderness areas, and opportunities for solitude and non-motorized recreation (aesthetics/access).

Requirement. Map identifying proposed trails and facilities.

Criteria. Do maps identify proposed trail locations?

See Attachment - Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Trails 1992.

Criteria. Are proposed trails located near wilderness boundary or designated nonmotorized recreation area.

No - proposed trails are not located near wilderness boundary or designated nonmotorized recreation areas.

Requirement. Trail location strategies.

Criteria. Is there heavy vegetative cover or topographic features between proposed trail and wilderness boundary/designated non-motorized area?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Do viable alternatives exist that would utilize vegetative screening between wilderness boundary or designated non-motorized area?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Do viable alternatives exist that would situate topographic features between proposed trail and wilderness area or designated non-motorized area?

Not Applicable.

Criteria. Does proposal include trails on or adjacent to established cross-country ski trails?

No - proposal does not include trails on or adjacent to established cross-county ski trails.

Criteria. Are there viable alternatives that would avoid placement of proposed trials on or adjacent to cross-country ski trails?

Not Applicable.

Requirement. Signing.

Criteria. Has signing program been established that would warn snowmobilers of shared use areas, wilderness boundaries, intersections, etc.,)

See Attachment - Signing and

Attachment H - Public Awareness.

Requirement. Speed Limits.

Criteria. Does proposed trail go through residential areas or areas of particular sensitivity?

Yes - proposed trail goes through residential areas or areas of particular sensitivity.

Criteria. Has applicant established appropriate speed limits or hourly restrictions in areas of sensitivity

See Attachment - Signing.

Criteria. Has applicant proposed public awareness plan that includes consideration for residential and sensitive areas?

See Attachment - Public Awareness Plan.



Issue 8

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Criteria. Has applicant provided law enforcement report from Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks Region Warden Captain and/or land managing agency identifying documented snowmobile trespass on private land and/or wilderness areas caused by adjoining or nearby funded trail and proposal for addressing such violations?

Contacted Sgt Mike Ottman, Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks Warden, August 29, 1996. Sgt Ottman stated there were no documented snowmobile trespass on private land and/or wilderness areas on the trail systems in our area.

(Helena Snowdrifters SNOWMOBILE) ENFORCEMENT PLAN

This plan integrates six enforcement strategies to generate compliance with public lands' travel restriction and state snowmobile regulations. Execution of these strategies will be a cooperative effort between enforcement agents from the U.S. Forest Service, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), and counties. These strategies are intended to meet each agency's enforcement mission and objectives for resource protection and public safety.

- ▶ The initial approach for enforcing travel restrictions is the signing of trailheads. Prominently posted trailhead information and maps will define travel restrictions on lands adjacent to established groomed trail systems. The trail grooming sponsor will, with the assistance from the land managing agency, post the travel restriction regulations.
- ▶ Local motorized clubs will annually inform their membership of travel restrictions next to established and maintained trail systems. Club members will be encouraged to disseminate the information to visiting backcountry users.
- ▶ To regularly ascertain the highest concentration of use; random trail patrols will occur. Trail safety will be encouraged through public contacts during patrols.
- ▶ Enforcement efforts will target locations where there is motorized intrusions into restricted travel areas, such as tree plantations. Speed limit signing and patrols will be made.
- ▶ Backcountry use will be monitored through coordination of interagency enforcement personnel. FWP and Forest Service staff will share information and combine efforts to conduct saturation enforcement activities at known high use locations and during high use periods. Normally these periods are weekends, holidays and after new snow occurrences.

Trail patrols will be done on days when environmental conditions and/or budgets allow. Safety of agency personnel will also be a determining factor when patrols will occur. Rapidly changing environmental conditions and potential avalanche hazards must be considered before conducting patrols.

AVALANCHE AWARENESS PLAN

Although certain conditions increase their chance of occurring, avalanches are unpredictable and can occur at any time or on terrain with little slope. The club will take an integrated approach to provide avalanche awareness to club members and the general winter back country user.

Public awareness of avalanches will be promoted through club safety meetings, club sponsored activities and safety training courses held for interested persons in the local community and area. Trail grooming performed by snowmobile clubs will practice avoidance procedures in areas of avalanche potential.

Winter back country users will be encouraged not to assume there is no danger or hazards such as avalanches or rapid changes in weather conditions. It will be recommended that back country users assess and relate outdoor conditions and risks to personal abilities. It is expected that regardless of the winter back country activity, participants in those activities accept the potential risks and hazards associated with the back country.

Snowpack conditions can change rapidly. Back country users will also be encouraged too, when available to contact the local avalanche advisory for current snowpack conditions.

Avalanche, safe snowmobiling practices and back country literature will be made available, for free, to the general recreating public through club sponsored safety and training programs or from public resource agencies.

The club in cooperation with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and U.S. Forest Service will promote safe, ethical and responsible behavior through sponsored snowmobile safety and educational programs.

Issue I 0

CHANGES IN AESTHETIC VALUES

Changes in aesthetic values along trails and in recreation based winter communities (noise, visuals, litter).

Requirement. Litter Remediation.

Criteria. Has applicant included a trash receptacle location, placement and management strategy?

See Attachment - Litter Remediation

Criteria. Has applicant proposed "pack-it-in pack-it-out" type signing strategy?

**See Attachment - Litter Remediation
Attachment M - Signing.**

Requirement. Trail Location Strategies.

Criteria. Has applicant satisfied questions 25 - 29?

**See Attachment - Public Awareness,
Attachment - Signing, and
Attachment - Litter Remediation**

ATTACHMENT: A

GROOMING OPERATIONS PLAN

SNOWMOBILE TRAIL GROOMING
OPERATIONS PLAN

The Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Club plans on providing groomed trails in the areas listed below on the following schedule, from 12/1, 19 96 to 3/30, 19 97:

<u>Trail</u>	<u>Length</u>	<u>When & How Often Groomed</u>	<u>Priority</u>
All Helen Groomed	205 miles	Every other day	#1

(Add attached sheet if needed.)

This schedule is subject to budget, weather, and equipment breakdowns.

Assurances:

We shall remove, lessen, or sign known and potential hazards in cooperation with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and affected landowners. Directional and informational signs shall also be provided according to need and budget availability. We will have a safety plan detailing education efforts, search and rescue, accident reporting and follow-up procedures developed prior to any trail grooming.

Attachment A

HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS SNOWMOBILE TRAILS 1992



Stream Crossings (bridges/existing structures)



Private Property



County Roads



Bureau of Land Management

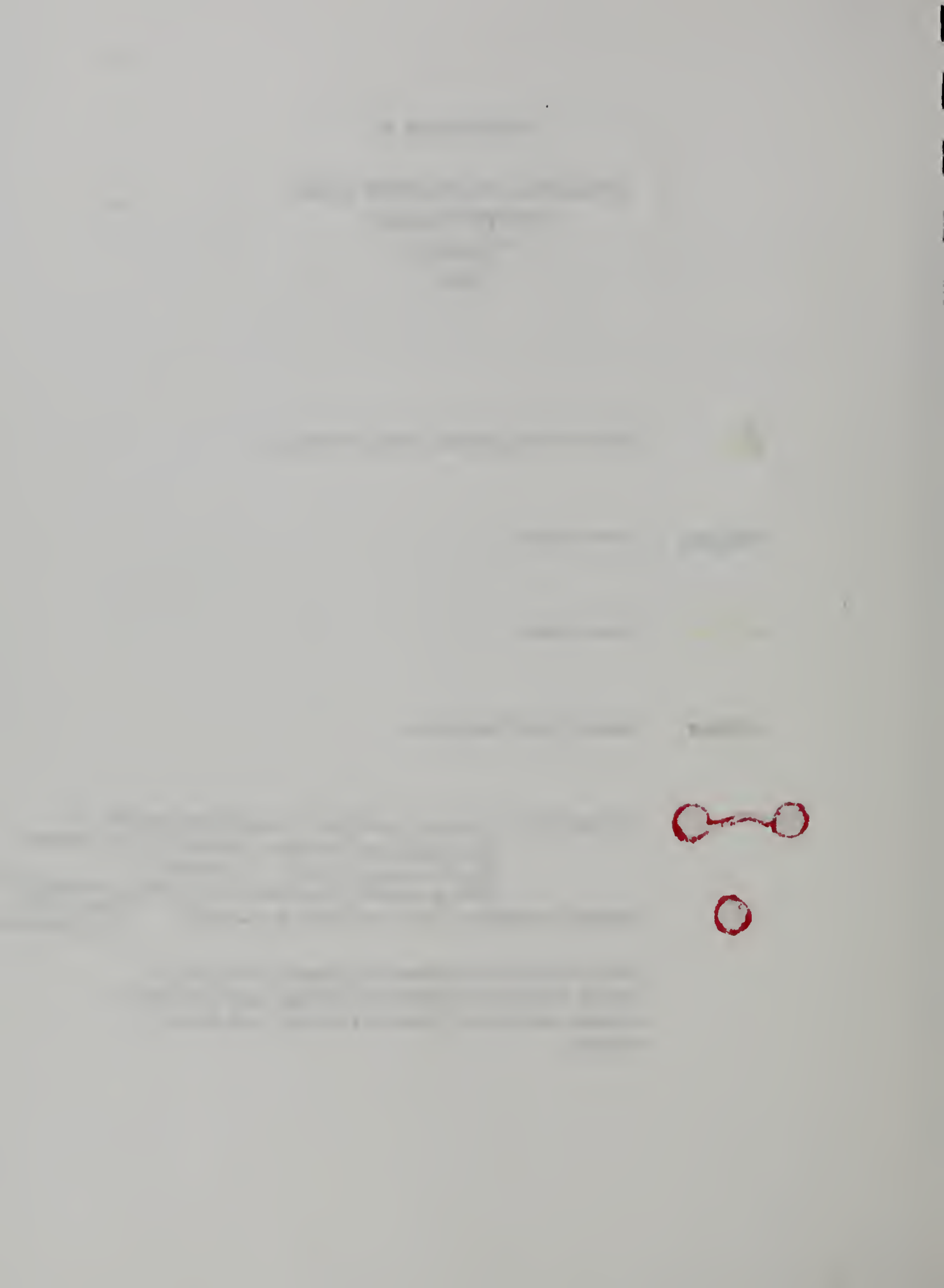


Re-routed Trails *(Basin Creek trail reroute connector to Deer Lodge trail system and not to be groomed due to narrow trail.) nmc*



Proposed Re-routing of Trail *(not to be groomed) Other re-routes have been in system for several years per Club secretary.*

NOTE: Exact route has not been designated with U.S. Forest Service. Purpose of re-routing is to eliminate snowmobile traffic on county roads (Powell County) - Telegraph Creek & Little Blackfoot.





HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS HELENA, MONTANA

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

1992



*Montana Department of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks*



FOREST SERVICE



BUREAU OF
LAND MANAGEMENT

Attachment B

**U.S. FOREST SERVICE ENVIRONMENTAL
DOCUMENTATION DECISION MEMO**



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Helena Ranger District
2001 Poplar Street
Helena, MT 59601
Fax Number: 406-449-5740
Office Number: 406-449-5490

File Code: 2350

Date: January 29, 1996

Helena Snowdrifters
Snowmobile Club
P.O. Box 4626
Helena, MT 59604

This letter is written in response to a request, by the Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Club, for information regarding snowmobile trails located on Forest Service lands.

Snowmobile trails located on Forest Service lands, as identified by the Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Club trails map, are located within areas where this type of activity is not restricted. Information on travel restrictions are shown on the Travel Plan Maps for the Helena and Deerlodge National Forests. Travel Plan Maps were developed in association with the Forest Plan for each Forest. The location of the snowmobile trails, in conjunction with the Travel Plan Maps, should satisfy the NEPA requirements for the Environmental Review Criteria as requested in the Snowmobile Grant Program.

If you need any further information please contact me at the above address.

Sincerely,

DENIS HART
Helena District Ranger



Attachment C

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL
DOCUMENTATION DECISION MEMO**



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Headwaters Resource Area

106 North Parkmont

P.O. Box 3388

Butte, Montana 59702-3388

IN REPLY TO:

8360 (075)

JAN 22 1996

Dana Weber
Helena Snowdrifters
PO Box 4626
Helena, Montana 59604-4626

Dear Ms Weber:

Thank-you for your letter of December 18, 1995. This response has been delayed due to the past government shut down. Hopefully, the following information will be timely and useful in meeting your needs.

The BLM Headwaters Resource Area confirms that all existing and mapped snowmobile trails identified within existing agreements with your club are in conformance with NEPA requirements. In addition future maintenance of these trails are categorically excluded from the NEPA documentation process. These trails are recognized on the BLM transportation system and have been incorporated on travel plan maps where planning efforts have been done. For those areas where travel plans have yet to be completed such as Marysville, all existing BLM roads and trails are open to snowmobiles, as well as other motorized uses throughout the year.

Please contact Brad Rixford at 494-5059 should you need additional information.

Sincerely,

Merle Good
Area Manager

Attachment D

MULTI-PARTY AGREEMENT

DEVELOPMENT AND OPERATING AGREEMENT

Between

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT - USDI

and

DEERLODGE NATIONAL FOREST - USDA FOREST SERVICE

and

HELENA NATIONAL FOREST - USDA FOREST SERVICE

and

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS

and

HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS CLUB

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into by and between the Helena Snowdrifters Snowmobile Club, a non-profit organization in the State of Montana, hereinafter referred to as the CLUB, and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, State of Montana, hereinafter referred to as the DEPARTMENT, and the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of Interior, hereinafter referred to as the BLM, and the Deerlodge and Helena National Forests, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, hereinafter referred to as the FOREST SERVICE, under the provisions of Montana, Code 23, Chapter 2, and the Acts of June 30, 1914, (16 USC 498) and June 12, 1960, (16 USC 530) and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-579, 90 Stat. 2743, 43 USC 1737). The five parties of this Agreement will be hereafter referred to as COOPERATORS.

WHEREAS, the FOREST SERVICE is responsible for the National Forest's recreation resources and their being available for public use and enjoyment, and

WHEREAS, managed and maintained snowmobile trails in the vicinity of Helena, Boulder, Basin and portions of the Headwaters Resource Area (BLM) and the Helena and Jefferson Ranger Districts (FOREST SERVICE) need to be signed, maintained and groomed to provide snowmobiles with safer and more enjoyable recreation experience and

WHEREAS, the BLM is responsible for the Public Domain recreation resources and their being available for public use and enjoyment, and

WHEREAS, the CLUB is interested in the maintenance and operation of snowmobile facilities and activities on lands administered by the FOREST SERVICE and BLM, for use by the general public, and

WHEREAS, the DEPARTMENT controls State funds earmarked for the development and maintenance of snowmobile trails and desires to cooperate with the FOREST SERVICE, BLM and the CLUB in the development and maintenance of snowmobile facilities on the lands administered by the FOREST SERVICE and BLM, and

WHEREAS, the general public will benefit from the four parties cooperating in providing for these recreation facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the above premises, the parties hereto agree as follows:

A. THE CLUB SHALL:

1. Meet with the State to develop an annual operating plan showing grooming routes, schedules, signing, and CLUB officers. Provide copies to the DEPARTMENT, FOREST SERVICE and BLM by June 15 of each year.

2. Erect at the trailhead certain signs as needed and store these signs in the off season. Necessary signs will be detailed in the annual operating plan. Signs approved by the DEPARTMENT shall be purchased by the DEPARTMENT and installed by the CLUB.

3. Provide and erect at strategic points along the snowmobile trails, certain signs showing trail locations, lengths, and difficulty. A sign which states that the project is funded by state gasoline tax refunds and snowmobile registration and decal fees and lists the cooperators shall be erected at any parking areas or the trailheads. Signs approved by the DEPARTMENT will be purchased by the DEPARTMENT and installed by the CLUB.

4. Perform such trail maintenance and marking as may be necessary to keep the trails safe and useable. Monitoring for safety and usability should be performed periodically by the DEPARTMENT. See the USDA FSH No. 2309.18 Trail Handbook for guidelines.

5. Provide trail grooming once a week, more or less, depending upon the suitability of snow conditions for snowmobiling and availability of funds in their snowmobile trail grooming budget. The CLUB shall bill the DEPARTMENT at the end of each grooming month for costs of grooming. The CLUB may request an advance of funds by writing the DEPARTMENT at least two (2) weeks prior to need for funds. The total bill to the DEPARTMENT shall not exceed the annual grant amount for any snow season. The billings shall itemize all expenses billed to the DEPARTMENT and include documentation as required by the DEPARTMENT.

6. Meet annually or more often with the other parties to this Agreement to coordinate activities pursuant to this Agreement.

7. Hold the DEPARTMENT, FOREST SERVICE and BLM harmless from and indemnify them from and against all liability for injuries to or death of persons or damage to property arising from the negligent or reckless acts of its employees or agents in carrying out the terms of this Agreement.

8. Indicate in any publicity and/or news articles that FOREST SERVICE (Helena and Deerlodge National Forests) and BLM lands are being used.

9. Refrain from trail grooming and the promotion of snowmobile use until after December 1.

THE FOREST SERVICE SHALL:

1. Allow its lands, in the areas indicated on the attached map, to be used for snowmobiling.

2. Allow the DEPARTMENT, upon review and approval by the FOREST SERVICE of detailed Annual Operating Plans, to improve trails by machine grading, cutting brush and small timber, minor bridge construction and other improvements as may be necessary.

3. Meet annually or more often with other parties to this Agreement for the purpose of coordinating activities undertaken pursuant to this Agreement.

C. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL:

1. Reimburse the CLUB for the costs it incurs for grooming trails not to exceed the annual grant amount per snow season. Costs shall be based upon rates established through negotiation with local contractors by the CLUB. The DEPARTMENT will have no liability for charges in excess of the annual grant amount per snow season, unless, within the sole discretion of the DEPARTMENT, it is determined that sufficient additional funds exist in the Snow Trail Grooming Account. If funds are available in that account, grooming costs may be reimbursed after the maximum charge of the annual grant amount has been incurred by the CLUB, provided, however, that such reimbursement shall be at the sole discretion of the DEPARTMENT.

2. Monitor the CLUB for performance standards and safety, and periodically report to the FOREST SERVICE and BLM adequacy of CLUB performance.

3. Meet annually or more often with the other parties to this Agreement for the purpose of coordinating activities undertaken pursuant to this Agreement.

4. Maintain and enforce guidelines of grooming according to USDA FSH 2309.18 Trails Handbook and appropriate DEPARTMENT standards.

D. THE BLM SHALL:

1. Allow the CLUB, upon review and approval by the BLM of detailed annual operating plans, to improve trails by minimal brush and small timber cutting, minor bridge construction and other improvements as may be necessary, and which are temporary in nature.

2. Allow its lands, in the areas indicated on the attached map, to be used for snowmobiling.

3. Meet annually or more often with other parties to this Agreement for the purpose of coordinating activities undertaken pursuant to this Agreement.

E. IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED THAT:

1. Any proposed development or betterment projects will be jointly agreed to by the COOPERATORS prior to their initiation.

2. Nothing herein shall be construed as binding the COOPERATORS for the payment of money beyond the current fiscal year unless a financial plan for subsequent years has been approved by the COOPERATORS.

3. No contributions herein provided for shall entitle the CLUB or the DEPARTMENT to share or interest in the said facilities other than the right to use the same under the regulations of the FOREST SERVICE and BLM. All improvements shall be and remain the property of the United States.

4. Permission to perform work on National Forest System Lands and Public Domain Lands under the terms of the Agreement do not in any way convey to the CLUB or the DEPARTMENT, their officials, or any person or persons working with the FOREST SERVICE or BLM in the performance of said work, employee status that would extend to them the benefits of the Federal Employees Compensation Act, as amended.

5. The snowmobile trails and facilities will be open to the general public. The CLUB and the DEPARTMENT will in no way control access to or use of the trails or improvements.

6. Nothing herein shall be construed to allow the CLUB to conduct special recreation events on National Forest System Lands or Public Domain Lands. Permission in the form of a special use permit and/or letter of authorization will be required to conduct such events on Federal lands.

7. No member of, or delegate to, Congress or Resident Commissioner shall be admitted to any share or part of this Agreement, or to any benefit that may arise therefrom; but this provision shall not be construed to extend to this Agreement if made with a corporation for its general benefit.

8. COOPERATORS will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) and in accordance with Title VI of that Act, no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, handicap, or national origin, be excluded from participating in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the COOPERATORS receive Federal financial assistance and will immediately take any measures necessary to effectuate this Agreement.

9. The CLUB and the DEPARTMENT shall indemnify the United States against any liability for damage to life or property arising from the occupancy or use of United States lands under this Agreement providing such damage to life or property is due to the negligent acts or omissions of the CLUB or DEPARTMENT.

10. This Agreement may be revised as necessary, by mutual consent of all parties, by issuance of a written amendment, signed and dated by all parties.

11. The rights and obligations of any party to this agreement may be terminated upon the giving of thirty (30) days written notice by that party. Unless terminated or modified by written notice, this Agreement will remain in force indefinitely.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this Agreement as of the last date written below.

HELENA NATIONAL FOREST

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

BY Dennis A. Hart
TITLE District Ranger
DATE 10/15/87

BY Robert M. Robinson II
TITLE Acting Area Manager
DATE 10-15-87

HELENA SNOWDRIFIERS

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF FISH,
WILDLIFE & PARKS

BY Wanda Skoetz
TITLE President
DATE October 13, 1987

BY [Signature]
TITLE ADM. PARKS DIV
DATE 10-13-87

DEERLODGE NATIONAL FOREST

BY Donna L. Schenck
TITLE District Ranger
DATE 10/15/87

Attachment E

FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS WILDLIFE CLEARANCE

HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS

PO BOX 4626

HELENA, MONTANA 59604-4626

December 18, 1995

Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region Three
Ray Heagney, Parks Operations Specialist
1400 South 19th Street
Bozeman, Montana 59715

Dear Mr. Heagney,

As you know, the Helena Snowdrifters are in the process of gathering the information needed to prepare the Environmental Review Criteria for the Snowmobile Grant Program.

We have reviewed the Categorical Exclusion steps and the Issues on the checklist, and request your assistance in obtaining a wildlife clearance.


Enclosed is our trail map with our existing trails in red and proposed new trails marked in green.

It is our understanding that the next step is to have your wildlife biologist identify the following areas of concern:

- Low snow cover
- Summer wet meadows
- Stream crossings
- Ungulate wintering
- Bald eagle nesting
- Grizzly hibernation

If you need any further information, feel free to contact me at 227-8740 (home) or 444-9707 (work). Thank you.

Sincerely,


Dana Weber
Treasurer

**Montana Department
of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



MEMORANDUM

TO: Ray Heagney - Region 3 Parks Operations Specialist
Lee Bastian - Region 2
FROM: Gayle Joslin *Gayle Joslin*
SUBJECT: Snowmobile Program
DATE: July 22, 1996

Ray, as per your request to submit comment on the existing trail systems for the Helena and Deerlodge National Forests, on the proper form, attached are two the "SNOWMOBILE GROOMING PROGRAM Regional Wildlife Clearance" forms. In addition, you suggested that a cover letter be used to expand upon the form if necessary.

My letter of April 23 addressed these systems, but subsequent to our meeting of June 7 with Lee Bastian, Brian Giddings and Errol Hammond of the Deerlodge Forest, some modifications were made with the understanding that a letter to Director Pat Graham, Trails Coordinator Bob Walker and Parks Administrator Arnold Olsen detailing our mutual concerns and needed modifications in the evaluation of the snowmobile program would be sent from Parks and Wildlife personnel who were at that meeting. Elements that we agreed were in need of evaluation were:

- A defined process, as an amendment to the Snowmobile Grant Program PEIS, which would accommodate wildlife needs as they become known.
- This process would allow revisions to snowmobile routes or use areas based on biological information that comes to light.
- Snowmobile maps are a cooperative venture between Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, National Forest Service, BLM. These maps currently do not adequately inform the snowmobiling public of their legal responsibilities regarding motorized use of roads/trails and area restrictions. From the perspective of wintering wildlife needs, this is a serious omission. It is recommended that all area and road restrictions relative to snowmobile use be printed on all Snowmobile Trails maps, similar to National Forest Travel Maps.
- BLM and Forest Service Travel Maps should be revised with the participation of FWP wildlife biologists over the next five years, or at the next revision cycle of the Travel Plan, which ever comes first, to more comprehensively address

July 22, 1996

wintering wildlife needs ranging from wintering amphibians to alpine furbearers and big game winter range. A specific effort to identify "play areas" that would have little or no impact upon wildlife would be emphasized.

Based on our June 7 meeting, we agreed that established routes through certain moose winter range, and in specific cases of elk/deer winter range, informational signing may suffice to minimize wildlife impacts. In other cases, rerouting may be in order. In no case should off-trail use be allowed in these areas. It is also recognized, at least by the wildlife biologists, that there may be cases where a specific trail may need to be abandoned as a result of conflicts with wildlife. Errol indicated that the Forest Service has all the flexibility they need right now to make such modifications.

Lee indicated that he would draft a letter and send to each of us for review. Since we are all swamped, maybe the issues listed here will be a start. Please feel free to discuss these ideas with others. I would feel better about the future of wildlife in the snowmobile program if our letter were delivered by October 1, the deadline indicated in the PEIS for comment on the existing trails program. I will attempt to draft that letter if you prefer, Lee. Please advise.

For those of you listed below, if I have missed points, or expanded on others (from my perspective), please feel free to edit, comment, redraft and get back to Lee or me. Thanks for your interest.

cc: Brian Giddings, Wildlife
Errol Hammond, Deerlodge Ranger District
Heidi Youmans, Wildlife
Joel Peterson, R-3
Larry Rau, BLM

SNOWMOBILE GROOMING PROGRAM
Regional Wildlife Clearance

_____ Trail expansion (attach map highlighting expansion)

EXISTING New Trail system (attach map highlighting trail system)

Existing trail system for HELENA National Forest
Snowmobile Club

Are there any wildlife concerns? Yes X No _____

If yes:

Species: Big game, furbearers, subnivean species, hibernating amphibians

1. Winter range: The routes around Marysville extending into Dog Creek are adequately located but some of the surrounding areas on BLM lands, including Edwards Mountain, Deer Creek, Piegan Gulch, Empire Creek are all used by elk and mule deer for winter range - these areas should be avoided as snowmobile play areas. The Drummlummon Hill is also used during less severe winters by elk and mule deer. Recommend snowmobiles remain on designated routes.
● Tenmile-Minnehaha-Lava Mtn & Mullan Pass routes conflict w/moose.

2. Travel corridor:

3. Other: Several trails extend into higher elevation habitat of sensitive species such as wolverines and lynx. Reserve opportunity to suggest changes in routes or mitigation features in future. Snowmobile routes and play areas should avoid all springs and creek heads to avoid impacting wintering amphibians.

Suggested alternate route: Big Limber leg of Cataract loop could be dropped.

Other mitigation measures (eg: signing, trail restrictions, etc.) Snowmobile trails through known moose winter range are problematic; stringent mitigative measures should be employed to avoid disturbance to moose. Informational signs indicating moose usage should be erected, with advice to allow moose to move off trails without harassment; not to push moose along trails; no travel off designated trail. Acknowledgement is needed to assure that wildlife needs will be accommodated, even if they require modification of the trail/play system. Close coordination between the FS and FWP is necessary in Travel Management so maps are appropriate and consistent.

X Approved with above-mentioned mitigation measures And opportunity for modifications for wildlife needs, in the future.

_____ Not approved as submitted

Opyle Berlin 7-22-96
Regional Wildlife Biologist Date Regional Parks Manager Date

SNOWMOBILE GROOMING PROGRAM

Regional Wildlife Clearance

_____ Trail expansion (attach map highlighting expansion)

EXISTING New Trail system (attach map highlighting trail system)

Existing trail system for Deerlodge National Forest
Snowmobile Club

Are there any wildlife concerns? Yes X No _____

If yes:

Species: Big game, furbearers, subnivean species, hibernating amphibians

1. Winter range: Whitehouse north 2 miles up Thunderbolt Creek is in elk/moose winter range. Trail extends into higher elevation habitat of wintering furbearing species; potential impacts should be noted. Reserve opportunity to suggest changes in routes or mitigation features in future.
2. Travel corridor: Elk will use the country west of Thunderbolt Creek in less severe snow years.
3. Other: Snowmobile routes and play areas should avoid all springs and creek heads to avoid impacting wintering amphibians. As information on sensitive species such as wolverines and lynx become available, recognize that modifications to the system may need to be implemented.

Suggested alternate route: _____

Other mitigation measures (eg: signing, trail restrictions, etc.) Bernice to Lockhart Meadows is moose winter range. Recognizing that the snowmobile trail head begins at Whitehouse, stringent mitigative measures should be employed to avoid disturbance to moose. Informational signs indicating moose usage should be erected, with advice to allow moose to move off trails without harassment; not to push moose along trails; no travel off designated trail. Acknowledgement is needed to assure that wildlife needs will be accomodated, even if they require modification of the trail/play system. Close coordination between the FS and FWP is necessary in Travel Management so maps are appropriate and consistent.

X Approved with above-mentioned mitigation measures

_____ Not approved as submitted

Gayla Estlin 7-22-96
Regional Wildlife Biologist Date Regional Parks Manager Date

Attachment F

SNOWMOBILE PROJECT AGREEMENT

SNOWMOBILE PROJECT AGREEMENT

THIS PROPOSAL requests an agreement be established between the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, an agency of the State of Montana, hereinafter called "Department," and (club name) HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS hereinafter called "the club."

WITNESSETH:

RECITALS

1. Montana statutes earmark a portion of gasoline taxes and snowmobile registration decal fees for snowmobile facility operation, maintenance and development for public use at no cost to the public.
2. Sufficient funds have accrued in the snowmobile earmarked revenue account to fund this proposal.
3. The Parks Division, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, is responsible for the administration of this program.
4. The Parks Division desires to seek means of funding snowmobile facilities maintenance projects, and to seek baseline information for snowmobile operations projects.
5. The Club is an entity in the immediate vicinity of the trails to be maintained and is desirous of seeing trails maintained for snowmobilers.
6. Both parties hereto desire to maintain trails for snowmobile use on land shown on a map submitted as a supplement to this application, designated Attachment "B", and
7. As demonstrated by the attached written statements, the landowner(s) of affected property(ies) has/have granted permission to the Club to carry out the proposal on affected property.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises, conditions, and terms hereinafter set forth, the Club proposes:

1. That Attachment "B" is an accurate depiction of the areas covered by this proposal.
2. That the Club will perform the following activities and duties:
 - A. Utilize dollars granted for the purpose of maintaining snowmobile trails detailed in Attachment "B". This maintenance shall be conducted as conditions required during the agreement period.

- B. Permit inspection of the project by the Department or its employees or agents at any and all reasonable times during the term of the agreement.
 - C. Indemnify and save harmless the State and the Department from all claims from injuries or damages arising or growing out of the operations performed under any resulting agreement.
 - D. Will not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age, or marital status, physical or mental disability, or national origin in the use of any property or facility maintained pursuant to any resulting agreement.
 - E. Fully comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations, etc. It shall be the Club's responsibility to familiarize itself with the relevant laws, rules, regulations, etc.
 - F. Require that in all subcontracts let in fulfilling any resulting agreement, preference must be given to the employment of bona fide Montana residents at the prevailing rate of wages applicable to the county or locality in which the work is being performed (section 18-2-401, et. seq., MCA).
 - G. Provide the Department with documentation of actual and necessary expenses incurred in trail maintenance in the form and upon the dates requested; all such documentation will be submitted by May 1 of the contract period. The Club agrees to allow and permit legislative or department auditors access to its records for the purpose of determining that this grant is administered in accordance with grant terms and conditions as set forth in any resulting agreement.
4. Agrees that any contract resulting from this proposal shall be with the club, as an independent contractor and does not establish an employer-employee relationship between the Department and the Club or any person employed by the Club for any purpose. In this regard, the Club agrees:
- A. To pay all required state, federal or local taxes, fees, including unemployment insurance and workers' compensation insurance or other assessments related to employment of any person or individual employed by the Club as necessary in fulfillment of this contract.

B. To abide by the State Prevailing Wage Rate - Section 18-2-406 MCA, which provides that contractors, sub-contractors and employees who are performing services under public works contracts as provided in Part 4, MCA shall post in a prominent and accessible site on the project or work area, not later than the first day of work, a legible statement of all wages to be paid to the employees on such site or work area.

5. Agrees that the Department may unilaterally terminate any contract resulting from this proposal upon refusal by the Club to allow access to records necessary to carry out the legislative audit and analysis function set forth in Title V, Chapters 12 and 13, MCA.
6. Agrees that venue will be in Lewis and Clark County should any legal action arise from this proposal or any contract issued in whole or in part therefrom.
7. Agrees that it is understood that a failure to comply with any of the provisions listed above can result in a rejection of this proposal and/or the voiding of any resulting contract.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises, conditions, and terms hereinafter set forth, the parties agree as follows:

1. The period covered by this agreement will begin July 1, (1996) and will continue in effect until June 30, (1997).
2. This agreement may be revised as necessary, by mutual consent of all parties by issuance of a written amendment, signed and dated by all parties.
3. The rights and obligations of any part to this agreement may be terminated upon giving thirty (30) days notice by the party.
4. The agreement accepts the Snowmobile Project Proposal/ Application and becomes part of the agreement.

BY: CLUB

<u> <i>Jess M. Smith</i> </u>	<u> 4/21/96 </u>
President	Date
<u> <i>Dana Weber</i> </u>	<u> 4/21/96 </u>
Secretary Treasurer	Date

BY: DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE AND PARKS

<u> <i>Stephen L. Lewis</i> </u>	<u> 9-3-96 </u>
Regional Supervisor	Date

Attachment G

PRIVATE LAND USE AGREEMENTS

MAGPIE AREA

Running W Cattle Co
Delores Hart
Galt Ranch

RIMINI-ELLISTON AREA

City of Helena
Powell County

BASIN AREA

Jefferson County
Basin Creek Mining, Inc.

MARYSVILLE AREA

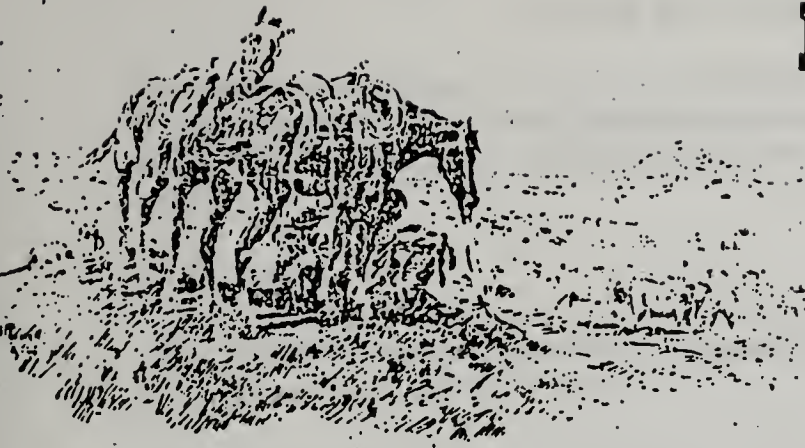
Lewis & Clark County
St Louis Drumlummon Mines
Doris & Grant Buswell



330.4e

Running W Cattle Co.

W



4385 WYLIE DR.
HELENA, MT. 59601
PHONE (406) 227-5208
MOBILE (406) 442-7960 - CAR 26
TWX 910-963-2458 MT LIVESTK HEL

December 5, 1978

To Whom It May Concern:

I hereby give my permission to the Montana Fish and Game and/or interested parties to groom snowmobile trails on Section 29 and the west half of Section 28, T 13 N; R 1 E (Jim Ball Basin).

The privilege of using this private land for public winter recreation is contingent on the following:

- (1) That there is no damage, misuse or destruction of the land, fences, or buildings in the Jimball area
- (2) That the people using the area see that it is kept free of litter.

Failure to respect the above request will terminate the privilege.

Craig Winterburn

Craig Winterburn

RUNNING W CATTLE CO.

RECEIVED

DEC 7 1978

RECREATION & PARKS

LEASE FOR RIDING

This lease agreement made and entered into this **1st day of September, 1995** by and between **Running W Cattle Co (Craig Winterburn)**, 4385 Wylie Drive, Helena, MT 59601 (227-5208) as Lessor, and **Helena Snowdrifters**, a nonprofit corporation, as Lessee.

WITNESSETH:

THAT WHEREAS, Helena Snowdrifters, a corporation, desires a place for the public to ride their snowmobiles in the wintertime.

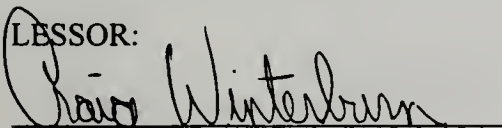
WHEREAS, Running W Cattle Co the Lessor, wishes to be protected so no claims can be made by prescription.

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar(\$1.00) and good and valuable considerations, the Lessor agrees to lease and demise **Section 29 and the west half of Section 28, T13 N; R 1 E (Jim Ball Basin)**.

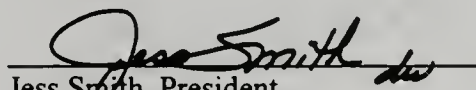
1. It is understood and agreed that a rental of one dollar (\$1.00) per year will be charged and the snowmobile club will make the payment; provided, however, the lease shall be a year to year lease, and may be canceled by either party.
2. It is understood and agreed that this lease shall be in effect for a period of one (1) year from the date hereof, and will be renewable so long as both parties are agreeable upon payment of the annual rental.
3. It is understood and agreed that the Lessor may at any time, upon written notice, cancel this lease. This is so that the lease is actually a year to year lease, and will not be perpetual. Likewise, the Helena Snowdrifters may cancel the lease upon written notice.
4. It is understood and agreed the Helena Snowdrifters will use their best efforts to see that no damage or misuse done to the real estate which is being leased. It is further understood that the area will be kept free of litter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have subscribed their names, the date and year in this agreement first herein above written.

LESSOR:


Running W Cattle Co
Craig Winterburn

LESSEE:


Jess Smith, President
Helena Snowdrifters

LEASE FOR RIDING

This lease agreement made and entered into this 1st day of **September**, 1995 by and between **Delores Hart**, 3840 Hart Lane, Helena, MT 59601 (227-6711) as Lessor, and **Helena Snowdrifters**, a nonprofit corporation, as Lessee.

WITNESSETH:

THAT WHEREAS, Helena Snowdrifters, a corporation, desires a place for the public to ride their snowmobiles in the wintertime.

WHEREAS, Delores Hart the Lessor, wishes to be protected so no claims can be made by prescription.

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar(\$1.00) and good and valuable considerations, the Lessor agrees to lease and demise **Section 4-27-28 (Jim Ball Basin)**.

1. It is understood and agreed that a rental of one dollar (\$1.00) per year will be charged and the snowmobile club will make the payment; provided, however, the lease shall be a year to year lease, and may be canceled by either party.
2. It is understood and agreed that this lease shall be in effect for a period of one (1) year from the date hereof, and will be renewable so long as both parties are agreeable upon payment of the annual rental.
3. It is understood and agreed that the Lessor may at any time, upon written notice, cancel this lease. This is so that the lease is actually a year to year lease, and will not be perpetual. Likewise, the Helena Snowdrifters may cancel the lease upon written notice.
4. It is understood and agreed the Helena Snowdrifters will use their best efforts to see that no damage or misuse done to the real estate which is being leased. It is further understood that the area will be kept free of litter.

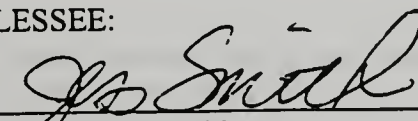
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have subscribed their names, the date and year in this agreement first herein above written.

LESSOR:



Delores Hart

LESSEE:



Jess Smith, President
Helena Snowdrifters

LEASE FOR RIDING

This lease agreement made and entered into this 9 day of Dec., 1988
by and between GALT Ranch as Lessor, and HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS,
a nonprofit corporation, as Lessee.

W I T N E S S E T H :

THAT WHEREAS, Helena Snowdrifters, a corporation, desires a place its members
can ride their snowmobiles in the wintertime.

WHEREAS, GALT Ranch the Lessor, wishes to be protected so no
claims can be made by prescription.

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the sum of One Dollar (\$1.00)
and good and valuable considerations, the Lessor agrees to lease and demise
(description of land)

Trail through Sunshine Basin -

1. It is understood and agreed that a rental of One Dollar (\$1.00) per
year will be charged and the snowmobile club will make the payment;
provided, however, the lease shall be a year to year lease, and may
be canceled by either party.
2. It is understood and agreed that this lease shall be in effect for a
period of one (1) year from the date hereof, and will be renewable
so long as both parties are agreeable upon the payment of the annual
rental.
3. It is understood and agreed that the Lessor may at any time upon
written notice cancel this lease to terminate with any particular
year. This is so that the lease is actually a year to year lease,
and will not be perpetual. Likewise, the Helena Snowdrifters may
cancel the lease at any time upon written notice.
4. It is understood and agreed the Helena Snowdrifters will use their
best efforts to see that no damage is done to the real estate which
is being leased.
 - A) Will post gates against trespass & hunting.
 - B) Stay on groomed trails
 - C) Ask Rec 1

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have hereunto subscribed their names,
the day, and year in this agreement first hereinabove written.

LESSOR:

Bill Galt

LESSEE:

Vonne Schatz
VONNE SCHATZ • PRESIDENT
HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS

Verbal approval Dec 95
for 95-96 Season
Auleber

AGREEMENT FOR RIDING

This agreement made and entered into this **1st day of March, 1996** by and between **City of Helena**, and the **Helena Snowdrifters**, a nonprofit corporation.

WITNESSETH:

THAT WHEREAS, the Helena Snowdrifters desires a place for the public to ride their snowmobiles in the wintertime.

WHEREAS, City of Helena, wishes to be protected so no claims can be made by prescription.

NOW, THEREFORE, City of Helena agree to allow access of the trail/road on ^{T8N R6W} **Section 14 MS 7401** for use as a public snowmobile trail.

1. It is understood and agreed that either party, upon written notice, may cancel this Agreement.
2. It is understood and agreed that the Helena Snowdrifters will use their best efforts to see that no damage or misuse is done to the real estate in which access is being granted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have subscribed their names, the date and year in this agreement first herein above written.

Charles B. Deibert *Mayor* *Sept.*
City of Helena

Jess Smith
Jess Smith, President
Helena Snowdrifters

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
POWELL COUNTY MONTANA
ROAD USE PERMIT

Pursuant to Section 23-2-631 M.C.A. (1993), the Board of County Commissioners of Powell County Montana hereby issue this permit for the operation of snowmobiles on a portion of a county road:

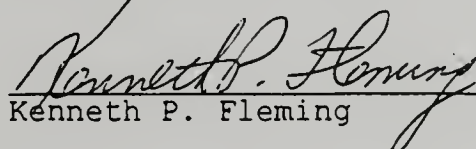
1. Snowmobiles may be operated on the 3.9 mile portion of the Little Blackfoot Road in Powell County, Montana and an approximate one mile portion of the Telegraph Creek Road in Powell County, Montana indicated on the map attached hereto.
2. Snowmobiles may only be operated on the described road in accordance with the provisions of Sections 23-2-632 and 23-2-633 M.C.A. (1993) and when equipped with head and tail lights and registered as required by law.
3. Operators of snowmobiles on the county road pursuant to this permit are required to have a valid motor vehicle driver's license, and must obey all existing laws pertaining to motorized vehicles. Whenever possible, snowmobiles must travel in single file on the extreme right hand side of the road, at a speed no greater than 15 m.p.h.
4. Appropriate signage will be provided by the Helena Snowdrifters (ex: Watch for snowmobiles on road, snowmobile restrictions, etc.).
5. This permit shall expire June 1, 1996.

DONE this 19th day of December, 1995.

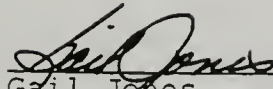
Board of County Commissioners
Powell County Montana



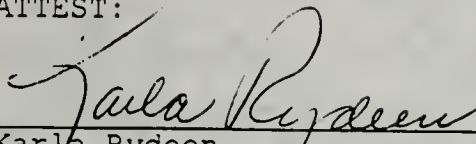
Don Valiton, Chairman



Kenneth P. Fleming


Gail Jones

ATTEST:


Karla Rydeen
Clerk and Recorder
Powell County Montana



AVON
VABM
5316 22
1630

BLACKFOOT GUIDE MERIDIAN

STANDARD

NORTHERN

ELLISTON
(BM 5046)
539

CROMWELL
DIXON

VISTA

DIVIDE

CONTINENTAL

Saw timber on road

VABM
Walker
5980 2129
5365

VABM
15994
11897

AVON
VABM
5316 22
1630

NEGRO
MIN
495

JERICHO
MIN
7378

AMSTRONG
7249

AVON
VABM
5316 22
1630

NEGRO
MIN
495

JERICHO
MIN
7378

AMSTRONG
7249



HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS

PO BOX 4626

HELENA, MONTANA 59604-4626

July 16, 1996

Powell County Commissioners
Powell County Courthouse
Deer Lodge, Montana 59722

Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of the Helena Snowdrifters I would like to thank you for allowing the snowmobile community to use the Little Blackfoot and Telegraph Creek roads at Elliston for access to the snowmobile trail system.

Our permission to use the county road was for the 95-96 season. We hope the signing was a help with the traffic problem, because of the snow conditions the area had very heavy use. We are making every effort to establish a trail over the hill so the county road will not have to be used at all. We would like to know if any decision has been made or whether you have considered allowing us to use the road again for the 96-97 season. If there is anything we need to do just let us know as soon as you can. The summer is just flying by and snow is just around the corner.

If you have any question, please feel free to call me at 227-8740.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Tom Weber
Trails Chairman

JEFFERSON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
COURTHOUSE, P.O. BOX H
BOULDER, MT 59632
PHONE 406-225-4251 OR 800-366-4251 EXT. 44
FAX 406-225-3776

LEONARD WORTMAN, CHAIR

GLENNA OBIE

CHUCK NOTBOHM

November 1, 1995

Helena Snow Drifter's
P.O. 4626
Helena M.T.
59604

Jefferson CO. doesnt have a problem with your grooming above
Jack Creek
Hopefully we will have some snow soon, have a good year .

Sincerly Chuck Notbohm
Jefferson County Commissioner.

Chuck Notbohm

February 26, 1996

Pat Barringer
Jefferson Ranger District
Deer Lodge National Forest
2 Whitetail Road
Whitehall MT 59759

Dear Ms. Barringer:

Thank you for returning my telephone call last week. As indicated in our conversation, the Helena Snowdrifters is in the process of meeting compliance requirements for environmental impact on snowmobile trails in Jefferson County. In doing so, we need documentation with regard to who has right-of-way easements for the Cataract Road; i.e., Forest Service, Jefferson County, etc.

My understanding, south to north, the easements are as follows:

Jefferson County road: from Basin to junction new construction 8403 (mismarked on map as 8513--REFERENCE NOTE: T7N R5W northwest quarter of S15); i.e. where Snowdrift Creek comes to Road 175 is county road to Basin (your reference "Lava").

Forest Service: from Snowdrift Creek to head of Cataract Meadows; i.e. Snowdrift to Rocker Creek to Three Brothers to Cataract Meadows is Forest Service.

Your reference to "Lava" was not on my map. Also, I assumed junction new construction 8403 was the same as Snowdrift Creek Junction.

If you can provide a clearer interpretation, please do so. I would appreciate it. Thanks for you help.

Sincerely,



Carol Ogle (or Diane Tripp)
3247 Spokane Creek Road
East Helena MT 59635
475-3797/hm Diane/day or Carol, 444-2673/wk Carol/day

LICENSE AGREEMENT

THIS LICENSE AGREEMENT is entered into as of the **1st day of September, 1995**, by and between **Basin Creek Mining, Inc.**, 100 N. Park Avenue, Suite 310, Helena, Montana 59601 ("Basin" herein), an Arizona corporation, and the **Helena Snowdrifters**, PO Box 4626, Helena, Montana 59604-4624 ("Licensee" herein), a nonprofit corporation.

RECITALS:

WHEREAS, Basin is the owner of certain patented and unpatented mining claims and other property interests in Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Powell Counties, Montana, more particularly shown on the plat attached hereto as Exhibit "A" (the "Basin Property" herein);

WHEREAS, Licensee desires to obtain a license for its members to cross a portion of the Basin Property on snowmobiles during the **1995-1996** winter snowmobiling season; and

WHEREAS, Basin is willing to grant such a license upon the terms and conditions herein set forth.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the sum of \$10.00 paid by Licensee to Basin and other valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency whereof is acknowledged by each of the parties hereto, it is agreed as follows:

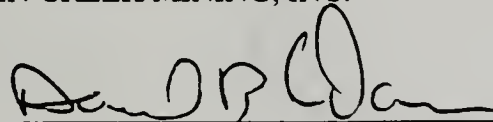
1. Basin hereby grants to Licensee a license, in common with others, for its members, and members of their families, to go over and across that portion of the Basin property identified on Exhibit "A" hereto as the "Snowmobile Route".
2. The license herein granted shall be for a term commencing on the date of execution hereof and ending in the **31st day of August 1996**; provided, however, that Basin may terminate said license at any time, with or without cause, upon thirty (30) days notice to Licensee of such termination.
3. The license herein granted is only a license and Basin hereby disclaims any duty or obligation to maintain or inspect all or any portion of the Snowmobile Route for any unsafe condition that may pose a hazard to persons using the same for any purpose.
4. Licensee accepts the license and the Snowmobile Route in its existing condition, "AS IS", and acknowledges that Basin **DOES NOT WARRANT OR REPRESENT THAT THE BASIN PROPERTY, OR THE SNOWMOBILE ROUTE IN PARTICULAR, IS SAFE OR USABLE FOR LICENSEE'S INTENDED PURPOSE.**
5. The license herein granted is only for access over and on the Snowmobile Route and Licensee understands that use by its members of any other portion of the Basin

Property may, in Basin's sole discretion, be treated by Basin as a trespass and dealt with by Basin accordingly.

6. Licensee covenants and agrees that it will not permit any member of its organization to use the Snowmobile route until it has communicated the terms and conditions of this license to such member and the member has agreed to abide by them.

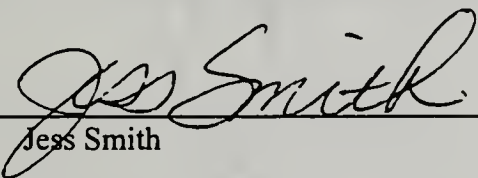
THIS LICENSE AGREEMENT has been made and executed as of the day and year first above written.

BASIN CREEK MINING, INC.

By 

Its Environmental Manager

HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS

By 
Jess Smith

Its President

LOWLANDS OF THE COLUMBIA





LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY

City County Building
P.O. Box 1724
316 North Park
Helena, Montana 59624
Telephone 406/447-8304

Board of County Commissioners

November 7, 1995

Dana Weber, Treasurer
Helena Snowdrifters
P.O. Box 4626
Helena, MT 59604-4626

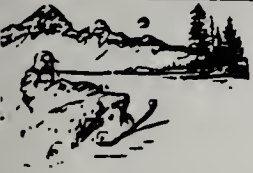
Dear Dana:

I am in receipt of your letter dated October 31, 1995 on behalf of the Helena Snow Drifters. Your request to groom a three mile section of County road from the Austin Parking Lot to the railroad trestle for recreational use is approved for the 1995-1996 snowmobile season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mike", is written in dark ink.

Michael A. Murray, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners



HELENA SNOWDRIFTERS

PO BOX 4626
HELENA, MONTANA 59604-4626

RECEIVED
LEWIS & CLARK COUNTY COMMISSION

JUL 19 1996

BY _____
FILE _____

July 16, 1996

Lewis & Clark County Commissioners
Attn: Mr. Mike Murray
PO Box 1724
Helena, Montana 59624-1724

Dear Mr. Murray,

On behalf of the Helena Snowdrifters I would like to thank you for allowing the snowmobile community to use the county road at Marysville for access to the snowmobile trail system.

We know our permission to use the county road was on a "trial basis" for the 95-96 season. We would like to know if any decision has been made as to whether we will be allowed to use the road again for the 96-97 season. If we are granted permission for another season we need to contact BLM concerning re-routing the trail after we leave the county road. If there is anything we need to do just let us know as soon as you can. The summer is just flying by and snow is just around the corner.

If you have any question, please feel free to call me at 227-8740.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Tom Weber
Trails Chairman

*Dear Tom -
We will need to meet on this
years snow season. It's my
understanding that your
club crossed last year has
been sold; a new route may
be needed this year. We may
be back to square one; need
to start over this year - I
need to get meetings going in
early August (next couple of weeks)
7-30-96 ZL*

AGREEMENT FOR RIDING

This agreement made and entered into this 1st day of March, 1996 by and between St Louis Drumlummon Mines, and the Helena Snowdrifters, a nonprofit corporation.

WITNESSETH:


THAT WHEREAS, the Helena Snowdrifters desires a place for the public to ride their snowmobiles in the wintertime.

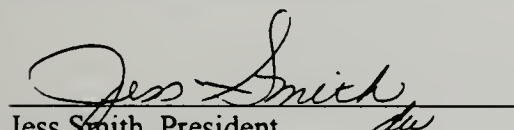
WHEREAS, St Louis Drumlummon Mines, wishes to be protected so no claims can be made by prescription.

NOW, THEREFORE, St Louis Drumlummon Mines agrees to allow access of the trail/road on T11N R6W Section 1 for use as a public snowmobile trail.

1. It is understood and agreed that either party, upon written notice, may cancel this Agreement.
2. It is understood and agreed that the Helena Snowdrifters will use their best efforts to see that no damage or misuse is done to the real estate in which access is being granted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have subscribed their names, the date and year in this agreement first herein above written.


St Louis Drumlummon Mines


Jess Smith, President
Helena Snowdrifters

St Louis Drumlummon Mines
PO Box 13220
Spokane, WA 99213-3220

Description/Location: **T11N R6W Section 1**

 ? To the best of my knowledge the road/trail on the above property has Forest Service or BLM right-of-way, easement, or is under their control or management.

 At this time I **do not** wish to grant snowmobilers access through the above property.

Comments: _____

Kevin Deval Lee
St Louis Drumlummon Mines

AGREEMENT FOR RIDING

This agreement made and entered into this 1st day of March, 1996 by and between Doris & Grant Buswell, and the Helena Snowdrifters, a nonprofit corporation.

WITNESSETH:

THAT WHEREAS, the Helena Snowdrifters desires a place for the public to ride their snowmobiles in the wintertime.

WHEREAS, Doris & Grant Buswell, wishes to be protected so no claims can be made by prescription.

NOW, THEREFORE, Doris & Grant Buswell agrees to allow access of the trail/road on Section 27 T11N R6W MS 9434 for use as a public snowmobile trail.

1. It is understood and agreed that either party, upon written notice, may cancel this Agreement.
2. It is understood and agreed that the Helena Snowdrifters will use their best efforts to see that no damage or misuse is done to the real estate in which access is being granted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have subscribed their names, the date and year in this agreement first herein above written.

Grant W Buswell 3-29-96
Doris W. Buswell - 3-29-96
Doris & Grant Buswell

Jess Smith
Jess Smith, President *dw*
Helena Snowdrifters

NOTE:
We live at 2150 N. Palo Verde Blvd.
Lake Havasu City, Arizona 86404, Phone
520-680-4823 from Nov. 1st until
May 1st. GWR

Attachment H

PUBLIC AWARENESS PLAN

The Helena Snowdrifters have been working in conjunction with the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, U.S. Forest Service, and other land management agencies to establish a Public Awareness Plan for the snowmobile trail systems in our area.

All members of the Helena Snowdrifters will be aware of practices in this Plan and as members club should encourage all other snowmobilers to abide by these practices.

The following are methods in which we will "get-the-word-out" or inform the public of what will be the expected behavior while using the trail system:

- ..an aggressive signing strategy in compliance with local, county, state, and federal agencies
- ..announcements at monthly meetings and club news letters
- ..notices to other organizations and clubs
- ..special interest speakers/guests at monthly meetings
- ..newspaper ads and flyers
- ..posters in local business
- ..weekly radio reports
- ..Montana Snowmobile Association news articles
- ..Fish, Wildlife, and Parks interpretive signs
- ..recorded phone report updated weekly or daily if necessary
- ..detailed safety education course under the guidance of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
- ..public service announcements using local radio and television
- ..news releases through local newspaper, radio, and television
- ..informational billboards in parking areas, at trail heads, and along trail where possible
- ..information officers/members on trails

With our Public Awareness Plan we will be able to inform the trail users as to what their expected behavior will be while using the trail system as well as encourage public awareness of such things as:

- ..possible expansion or rerouting of a trail
- ..additions or relocations of parking/access areas
- ..additions to certain areas (i.e. restroom facilities, etc)
- ..avoidance of areas with insufficient snowcover
- ..all stream crossings will be accomplished by using existing structures
- ..if you pack-it-in -- you will pack-it-out (or pick-it-up if it is there)
- ..seasonal restrictions (i.e. big game hunting season), grooming of trails will not start until after December 1 and usually ends by April 30

- ..notify trail users of any necessary seasonal adjustments in snowmobiling areas and grooming schedule by posting avoidance areas
- ..areas where there may be trespass restrictions
- ..populated and residential areas are considered sensitive areas and will be considered as "Idle zones"
- ..Impacts of elevated noise levels on humans and animals.
- ..snowmobilers will be expected to respect private property
- ..trails users should not create any changes in the aesthetic values of the land by running over trees, fence lines, etc.
- ..encourage voluntary compliance with maximum state sound levels

As snowmobilers we recognize the need to protect critical wildlife habitat to include ungulate winter ranges -- total avoidance of such areas is our practice. With this Public Awareness Plan we will stress the need for minimal impact on wildlife and the need to avoid these areas. Snowmobilers are aware that this is a very critical time of year for wildlife and should not cause any undue stress that would endanger them. Recommendations from the area FWP biologist, signage will be placed along the trail to direct snowmobilers through sensitive areas and encouraging riders to stay on established trails through this area. Violators will be reported to law enforcement. Wildlife will have the right-of-way at all times on the trail system.

The Helena Snowdrifters, in conjunction with other agencies and the Montana Snowmobile Association, are encouraging the development of technologies to reduce snowmobile emissions hoping to prevent problems with air quality and to improve snowmobiling standards.

We presently have several members that are involved with the Montana Snowmobile Association as well as the State Legislature. They provide our Club with the necessary representation to the Snowmobile Industry and Legislative Reform Committee.

The newer model snowmobiles have helped to reduce the possibility of air quality problems. The development of synthetic oils has resulted in reductions in air polluting emissions. Our Public Awareness Plan will stress the importance of air quality and suggest methods of keeping air quality acceptable, such as: performing pre-season checks and keeping machines tuned properly, general maintenance techniques, performance enhancing techniques, and the use of synthetic oil in their snowmobiles. We will be able to inform snowmobilers of the negative impacts of snowmobiles with over-due tuneups and encourage snowmobilers to spend less time in populated areas with idling before leaving for trails.

The Snowdrifters have adopted the "self policing" policy on the trail systems in this area. We should set the example, point out any unsafe or unacceptable behavior, and report violations to the proper authorities when necessary.

We have developed and are continuing to develop strategies to improve safety concerns along shared use trails and congested areas (i.e. in cooperation with the counties we have posted speed limit signs, crossing signs, snowmobiles on roads next "X" miles, etc).

With the Public Awareness Plan we will be able to inform trail users of issues concerning the trail system.

HELENA SNOWRIDERS
PUBLIC AWARENESS PLAN
ADDENDUM

- 3H: DECISION NOTICE WILL BE PROVIDED AFTER 30 DAY PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.
- 9a The snowmobile season for the Helena Snowdrifters Trail System is December 1st through April 1st. Normally during the snowmobile season there are no trails completely bare of snow. Snowmobilers use the non-melted portion of the trail or find alternate routes around the bare areas.
- 9b & 10 If insufficient snow cover areas are identified on trail system a map will be printed and distributed.
- 10a If we have sufficient snow melt for erosion, the trail will be signed or have an alternate signed route. If severe conditions exist the trail will not be groomed and the trail will be closed to snowmobiling.
- 13b Wildlife in the area of our trail system continues to co-exist. The club plans to make the public aware and to reduce impacts, confrontations, and protect habitat, preserve natural behavioral traits and population distributions. The club will work with the Fish, Wildlife and Parks to promote awareness and impact reduction with their assistance and guidance. To continue the awareness programs which have been ongoing for numerous years and to assist in the compliance of efforts to reach these goals. The club will, as a minimum; perform or assist with the following duties:
- ▶ Assure that the present information billboards at parking areas, trail heads and local businesses are installed and maintained so they are effective and comprehensive to users so they comply.
 - ▶ Trails will continue to avoid or skirt with vegetation shields as much as possible, ungulate wintering areas.
 - ▶ Should an area become an ungulate viewing area, pullout areas should be marked and stay on trail signing performed with the trail committee, tc. increase awareness and reduce impacts.
 - ▶ Establish alternate routes as necessary with the cooperation of the wildlife agencies as the wildlife use changes.
 - ▶ Assure future club publications, ads, maps, area papers and publications include as a minimum awareness notes of wildlife sensitive areas
 - ▶ Utilize interpretive signing along trails.
- 15f Continue to avoid cutthroat trout streams or establish bridges for stream crossing.

Existing trails will be signed for public awareness or new trails will not be established to avoid Boreal Owl areas.

20a

The State of Montana has infestations of many species of noxious weeds which have infested many areas of the state and county. Trails and staging areas have spotted knapweed.

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance and to promote desirable vegetation protection and control of noxious weeds in the groomed trail system. To protect the desirable vegetation the PAC will perform the following:

▶ Keep snowmobilers aware of the importance of protecting desirable vegetation.

20b

The club will coordinate with the particular county and land managing agency to identify infestation areas along trails.

29

According to the Helena National Forest enforcement report, no snowmobiling violations have been issued by the Helena or Deerlodge National Forests.

Attachment I

FOREST SERVICE MAP

Helena National Forest



Montana

1994

America's Great Outdoors

Forest



Service

United States Department of Agriculture

HELENA NATIONAL FOREST RECREATION ACCESS MAP

Elk, deer and lion hunting districts



United States Department of Agriculture

1996



R.6 E.

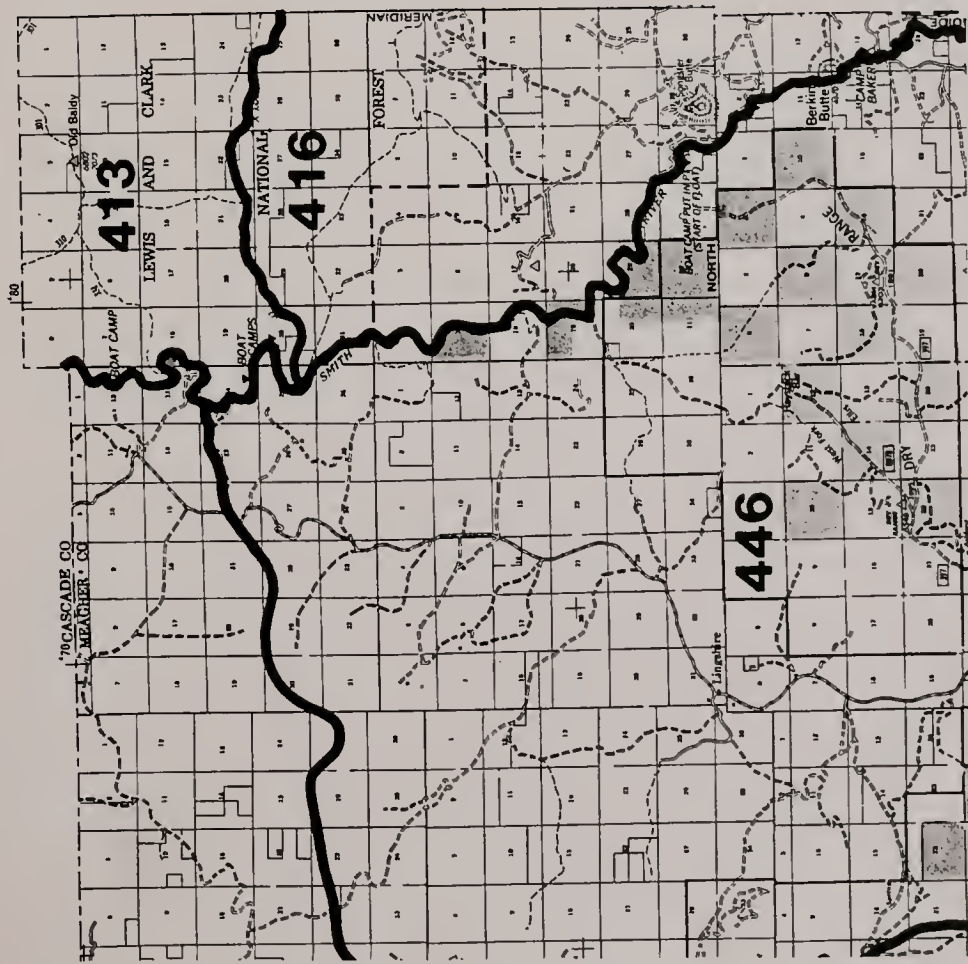
R.5 E.

R.4 E.

R.3 E.

R.2 E.

(EAST HALF)



Attachment J

NATURAL HERITAGE WILDLIFE AND VEGETATION

**Montana Department
of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 27, 1996

TO: Dana Weber

FROM: Bob Walker

SUBJECT: NRIS Species Information For Snowmobile PEIS

With this memo is information provided by the Montana Natural Heritage Program about sensitive species identified in the area of the Helena Snowdrifters groomed trails. Following are those occurrences that are in fact near your trails and suggested mitigation. They are identified on the enclosed snowmobile map in blue felt-tip with a number corresponding to the following information.

A. Magpie System : None identified.

B. Rimini/Marysville System

1. West Slope Cutthroat Trout : Stream crossings should be on bridge (not in bed of stream).
2. West Slope Cutthroat Trout : Same as #1.
3. West Slope Cutthroat Trout : Same as #1.
4. Boreal Owl : This is a species that ranges. To save controversy, you may want to forget this possible future trail. *Also see U.S. Forest Service attachment*
5. Same comment as #4. (Actually same location as #4)
6. West Slope Cutthroat Trout : If you decide in the future to groom this trail, be certain that any stream crossings are on bridges.
7. West Slope Cutthroat Trout : Same comment as #1.
- 8 & 9. West Slope Cutthroat Trout : Same as #1.

SPEED MEMO

TO: District Ranger	DATE: April 29, 1996
FROM: Brent Costain, District Wildlife Biologist	SUBJECT: Effects of Snowmobile Trail Grooming on Boreal Owls

MESSAGE:

The District Recreation shop has asked for clarification as to potential effects of snowmobile trail grooming on boreal owls in the Little Blackfoot drainage.

The last surveys for boreal owls in the Little Blackfoot watershed were conducted in the winter of 1991. These surveys located owls in the Negro Mtn/Jericho Mtn area (the locations were no more specific than that). Boreals are diminutive owls that are seldom seen and can usually only be located by special sampling (night-time hooting surveys in late winter; putting up and regularly checking special nest boxes). One thing that has become evident since widespread survey efforts began in Region 1 in the late 1980s is that these owls are more common and widespread than was previously believed. So, I think we can be confident that owls are still nesting in the Negro Mtn area and that several more are nesting at higher elevation in the Little Blackfoot and along the Divide.

Boreals are small owls that nest in tree cavities (generally 25-40 ft up the trunk) in mid-high elevation spruce/fir forests. They are at risk from habitat loss--primarily in mature and old-growth alpine fir/spruce/lodgepole pine forest above 6000 ft. However, they are relatively immune from most ground level disturbance, including the presence of snowmobiles. Boreal owls will establish nests wherever they find suitable cavities near appropriate hunting habitat (older spruce/fir/lodgepole). On the Wisdom and Wise River Districts in 1990-92, we found boreal owls successfully nesting along roadways, in picnic areas, and next to active timber sales. Hayward's assessment of boreal owls (Forest Service Gen.Tech. Report RM-253, 1994) also concludes that these owls tolerate regular human presence and machine noise and that there is no evidence of disturbance being a factor in depressing nest success.

So, as long as the snowmobile grooming operation isn't removing cavity-bearing trees in the alpine fir/Engelmann spruce zone, it shouldn't have any effect on boreal owls.



MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM

1515 East Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 201800
Helena, Montana 59620-1800
(406) 444-3009

RECEIVED
FEB 26 1996
RECREATION & PARKS
DIVISION

Bob Walker
State Trails Programs Coordinator
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
Parks Division - Trails Program
1420 East Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, Montana 59620-0701

February 23, 1996

Dear Mr. Walker,

In response to your request of February 2, 1996, I am sending a map of the search area T6-11N, R5-7W, which shows locations for species of special concern, and a corresponding report which summarizes the locations for these 23 species. I am also including a map of the search area T11-13N, R1E, and a corresponding report summarizing the locations of the 7 species of special concern occurring in this area. Finally, I am including a document which explains the format of these reports.

The enclosed maps convey information relevant to the requested areas only and are applicable only to these areas. These maps are not intended as comprehensive displays of all sensitive species data within their boundaries.

You will find that one of the listed occurrence records represents a plant community. Some of the plant community records that we track represent communities which are widespread in Montana. We include certain locations as sensitive records, however, because they represent exemplary, relatively pristine examples of certain community types, or because they have been established as study plots.

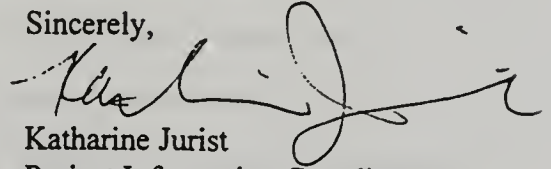
Please note that this report includes sensitive data intended for use within your agency and not for general distribution or publication. In particular, public release of specific location information may jeopardize the welfare of a threatened, endangered, or sensitive species or community. Individuals wishing to obtain additional information should contact the Heritage Program directly. This report may also include data from privately-owned lands, and approval by the landowner may be advisable if specific location information is considered for publication.

The results of a data search by the Montana Natural Heritage Program are not intended as

a final statement on sensitive species within a given area, or as a substitute for on-site surveys which may be required for environmental assessments.

I hope that the enclosed information is helpful to you, and I apologize for the delay in getting it to you. Should you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katharine Jurist', written in a cursive style.

Katharine Jurist
Project Information Coordinator

**Montana Department
of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 2, 1996

TO: John Hinshaw, Environmental Information Specialist

FROM: Bob Walker, State Trails Programs Coordinator

SUBJECT: Biological & Conservation Data System - Helena Snowmobile Trails

We are requesting location information for threatened, endangered and sensitive species for the Helena snowmobile trails as per the accompanying Township, Range and Section information. This information allows us to have the least impact possible with our snowmobile grant program and satisfies conditions of the Snowmobile Grant PEIS.

We are requesting maps and element occurrence for the locations identified in the accompanying table. If more information is necessary, please contact me at 4585. Thanks again for your assistance!

HELENA SNOWMOBILE TRAIL SYSTEM

Township	Range	Section
6 N	5W	4, 5, 8, 9, 17
7 N	5W	2, 3, 7, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33
7 N	6W	1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17
8 N	5W	6, 31, 32, 33, 34
8 N	6W	1, 4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 35, 36
8 N	7W	1, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17
9 N	5W	29, 30, 31
9 N	6W	14, 15, 16, 17, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36
9 N	7W	10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25
10N	6W	1, 2, 3, 4
11N	6W	2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 27, 28, 29, 31, 34
11N	7W	10, 11, 12, 13
11N	1E	1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 16
12N	1E	4, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 25, 34, 35, 36
13N	1E	29, 30, 32, 33

MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM
 Species of Special Concern: T11-13N, R1E
 Helena Snowmobile Trail System

Ref.	Name/Common Name	G Rank	S Rank	USESA	USFS	Township-Range-Sec.	County(ies)
012	PLECOTUS TOWNSENDII TOWNSEND'S BIG-EARED BAT	G4	S2S3	C2	SENSITIVE	010N001E 11	Broadwater
173	HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS BALD EAGLE	G4	S3B, S3N	LT	ENDANGERED	010N001W 4-6; 36 010N002W 1 011N002W 36 012N002W 18; 29; 32 012N001E 17	Lewis and Clark
006	LESQUERELLA KLAUSII DIVIDE BLADDERPOD	G3	S3				Lewis and Clark
029	LESQUERELLA KLAUSII DIVIDE BLADDERPOD	G3	S3			012N001E 29	Lewis and Clark
178	ONCORYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2	SENSITIVE	013N001E 25	Meagher
005	POLYGONUM DOUGLASII SSP AUSTINAE AUSTIN'S KNOTWEED	G5T4	S2S3		SENSITIVE	013N001E 19 013N001W 36	Lewis and Clark
003	LESQUERELLA KLAUSII DIVIDE BLADDERPOD	G3	S3			013N001W 25 013N001E 19	Lewis and Clark

None near tracks

7 Records listed.

MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM
 Species of Special Concern: T6-11N, R5-7W
 Helena Snowmobile Trail System

Ref.	Name/Common Name	G Rank	S Rank	USES	USESA	USFS	Township-Range-Sec.	County(ies)
002	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI BOUVIERI YELLOWSTONE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T2	S2			SENSITIVE	006N005W 16	Jefferson
003	ADOXA MOSCHATELLINA MUSK-ROOT	G5	S1			SENSITIVE	006N005W 18	Jefferson
002	CASTILLEJA CERVINA DEER INDIAN-PAINTBRUSH	G3C4	S1				007N008W 05	Powell
049	THYMALLUS ARCTICUS MONTANUS MONTANA ARCTIC GRAYLING	G5T2	S1	G1		SENSITIVE	008N005W 13	Jefferson
073	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2		SENSITIVE	008N006W 04	Powell
099	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2		SENSITIVE	008N006W 18	Powell
005	JUNCUS HALLII HALL'S RUSH	G4G5	S2			SENSITIVE	008N006W 16	Powell
054	AEGOLIUS FUNEREUS BOREAL OWL	G5	S3S4			SENSITIVE	008N007W 35	Powell
100	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2		SENSITIVE	008N007W 02	Powell
101	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2		SENSITIVE	008N007W 21	Powell
023	AEGOLIUS FUNEREUS BOREAL OWL	G5	S3S4			SENSITIVE	009N006W 31	Powell
1053	AEGOLIUS FUNEREUS BOREAL OWL	G5	S3S4			SENSITIVE	009N006W 1; 31	Lewis and Clark
158	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2		SENSITIVE	009N006W 14	Powell
004	PHLOX KELSEYI VAR MISSOULENSIS MISSOULA PHLOX	G5T2	S2	3C		SENSITIVE	009N006W 2; 11 010N006W 35	Powell; Lewis and Clark
188	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2		SENSITIVE	009N007W 11	Powell
042	CYPRIPEDIUM CALCEOLUS VAR PARVIFLORUM SMALL YELLOW LADY'S-SLIPPER	G5Q	S2S3			SENSITIVE	010N004W 26	Lewis and Clark
001	AGROPYRON SPICATUM/POA CUSICKII PA BLUEBUNCH WHEATGRASS/CUSICK'S BLUEGRASS ASSOC.	G?	S?				010N005W 34	Lewis and Clark

MONTANA NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM
 Species of Special Concern: T6-11N, R5-7W
 Helena Snowmobile Trail System

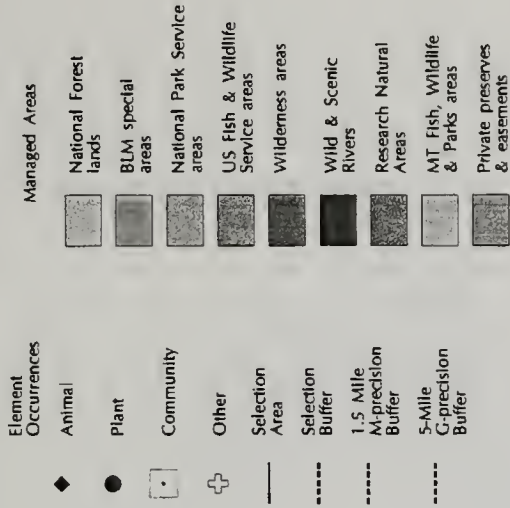
Ref.	Name/Common Name	G_Rank	S_Rank	USESA	USFS	Township-Range-Sec.	County(ies)
153	HALIAEETUS LEUCOCEPHALUS BALD EAGLE	G4	S3B, S3N	LT	ENDANGERED	010N008W 25	Powell
176	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2	SENSITIVE	011N005W 29	Lewis and Clark
189	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2	SENSITIVE	011N006W 19	Lewis and Clark
102	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2	SENSITIVE	011N007W 17	Lewis and Clark; Powell
103	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2	SENSITIVE	011N007W 22	Powell; Lewis and Clark
162	ONCORHYNCHUS CLARKI LEWISI WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT TROUT	G4T3	S3	C2	SENSITIVE	011N008W 14	Powell

23 Records listed.

Species of Special Concern

Search Area: T6-11N, R5-7W

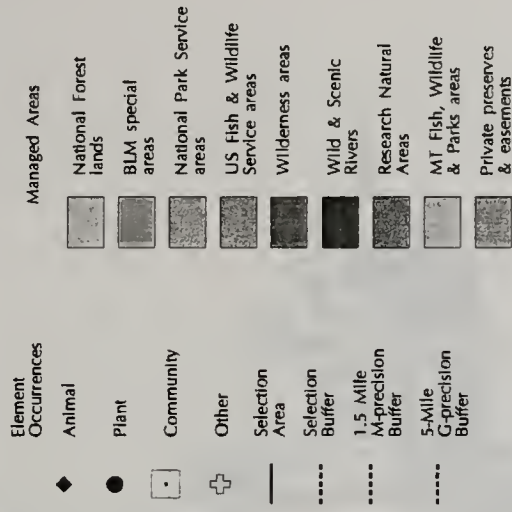
Helena Snowmobile Trails



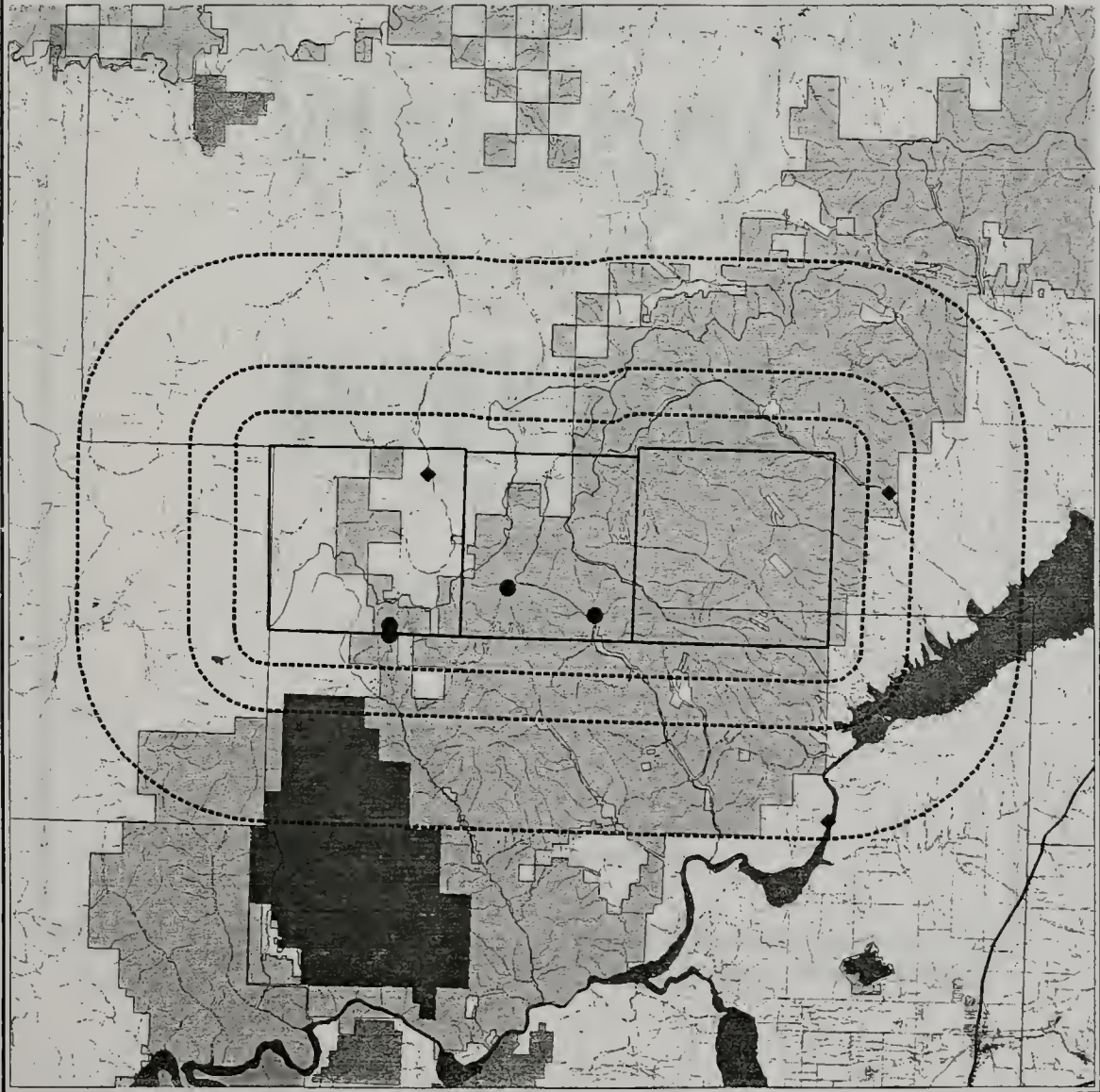
Not all legend items may occur on map.
 *Precision buffers are designed to capture those records that, though mapped outside the selection area, may actually occur within it.



Species of Special Concern Search Area: T11-13N, R1E Helena Snowmobile Trails



Not all legend items may occur on map. "Precision" buffers are designed to capture those records that, though mapped outside the selection area, may actually occur within it.





HELENA
SNOWDRIFTERS
HELENA, MONTANA

SNOWMOBILE
TRAILS

1992



Montana Department of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks



FOREST SERVICE



BUREAU OF
LAND MANAGEMENT

NATURAL HERITAGE

Attachment K

ORGANIZED EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Helena Snowdrifters host the following events or activities using the snowmobile trail systems in the area:

Poker Ride	approximately 200-250 participants
Ride for Charity	approximately 50-75 participants

Organized Group Rides (on the average one per month)	approximately 10-15 participants
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Communities in the area of the our events are notified in advance by personal contact or flyers/posters. This enables them to prepare for the increased activity in their area and in their business.

Attachment L

PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN

The Helena Snowdrifters present, several times a year, a very thorough Snowmobile Safety Course in conjunction with the Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks.

Our Public Awareness Plan and Signing strategies place a great deal of emphasis on safety also.

Our club Safety Officers provide the members with a briefing at our monthly meetings and prior to any organized or scheduled event.

Attachment M

SIGNING

Signing strategies include:

Pack-it-in – Pack-it-out

Fish, Wildlife, and Parks interpretive signing which stress the sensitive nature of wildlife and identify consequences for violations.

Warning signs will be posted for private property and all safety hazards will also be posted to provide for safer trail use.

Shared trail ethics are posted at trail heads.

Intersections, corners, stop signs, and speed limits are posted where required by the county or necessary for safety reasons.

Our signing strategies have been established to warn snowmobilers of upcoming safety hazards, remind them of traffic regulations which are applicable to all vehicles, and protect Montana's wildlife.

Attachment N

LITTER REMEDIATION

Trash receptacle will be located at all designated parking areas with additional bags being place in the bottom of the receptacle for convenience of the collectors. Club members will collect weekly or whenever at riding from that location. The groomer operators will also collect any trash when grooming that area.

Our sign strategy also includes the "pack-it-in -- pack-it-out" policy.

